OF THE

Life and Experiences

OF

MARION LAI—

An unmarried Woman in GA—

CONTAINING,

An Account of the Lord's gracious dealing with her ſoul, the deep exerciſe ſhe was ſometimes brought into, the ſevere trials and temptations ſhe met with, the remarkable deliverances wrought for her, and the ſignal diſplays of divine condeſcendency vouchſafed to her.

To which is ſubjoined,

A Collection of forty-ſeven Religious LETTERS, wrote to ſelect Friends, during her thirteen years travels.

WITH

A PREFACE, containing ſome farther Account of her LIFE and DEATH.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul.—I will meditate alſo of all thy work, and talk of thy doings. Pſalm lxvi. 16. and lxxvii. 12.

GLASGOW.

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M,DCC,LXXV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE,

BY THE

EDITOR.

IT will readily be granted, that the perusal of the lives of eminent saints, in which are recorded their religious experiences, of the love, goodness, and condescendency of a gracious and merciful God to their souls, is both a delightful and beneficial exercise. Hereby the reader is acquainted with the high attainments of the truly godly; their various exercises, while in their militant state; the divine support they are favoured with in all their trials; the power and efficacy of sovereign grace upon their hearts, which makes them striking examples of the truth and reality of religion; and that the Lord, in very deed, vouchsafes *to dwell with men on the earth*, and makes them attest the excellency, and recommend to others the religion of the blessed Jesus.

MARION LAIRD, the author of the following Memoirs, was allowed, by all who knew her, to be a very eminent saint, and one that was highly favoured of the Lord.—As she has not acquainted us with any account of the first period of her life, we presume the following short sketch thereof will not be unacceptable to the reader.

Our Author was the daughter of *Alexander Laird*, farmer in Berfern, in the parish of *Inverkip*, about four miles west of Greenock. She was born on the 23d of October 1722. As her parents removed from Berfern to Greenock, in her younger years, so she was educated and brought up in that place, till she was fit for service. She resided, for some time, in the station of a servant, in the family of one Alexander Parker, in a place called the Toor, in the parish of Kilbarchan: It was there the Lord first vouchsafed himself to her, took a saving dealing with her heart; and where her concern about religion, and her exercise of soul, were first

perceived. This happened, as she herself informs us, between the beginning of April 1740, and July 1741 *.

The Lord, it would appear, in bringing about a saving change upon her heart, brought her first to mount Sinai, and there discovered himself in all the awful terrors of Majesty, prior to his bringing her to mount Zion, and manifesting himself gracious and merciful to her soul, and shewing her the riches and glory of his grace †. She was often, even after the Lord had displayed his loving-kindness to her, left in the dark, on account of his withdrawing his gracious presence from her for a time. She was much harrassed with Satan's fiery temptations; and several times even tempted to put a period to her natural life: But on all such occasions, as she herself informs us, the Lord was a present help in the time of need.

While she enjoyed any measure of health and strength she was a conscientious attender upon the public and private exercises of religion; enjoyed much of the Lord's sensible presence in them; and often had her soul filled as with marrow and fatness.—Sacramental solemnities were, for the most part, very refreshing to her, and sometimes like the suburbs of heaven: and she carefully remembered the subjects that had been most beneficial to her, and the instruments the Lord made use of as messengers of peace to her soul.—Sabbath-days were generally feasting times to her; when at any time it was otherwise, she was much concerned about the Lord's hiding himself from her, and quite unhappy till he returned and lifted up the light of his gracious countenance upon her soul.—Perusing the scriptures was her daily exercise, and peculiar delight; she appeared to be well acquainted with them, could quote apposite portions of them, upon every occasion, with facility and ease; and seemed to have very distinct views of their true sense and meaning.—Secret prayer was what she had great pleasure in; often got very near access to God therein, and many times he was graciously pleased in that duty, to reveal to her the secrets of his covenant

* See Memoirs, page 17, 129.

† Memoirs, page 13, 17. Letter XV. p. 172.

h reſpecting herſelf and others.—Meditation, eſpe-
lly upon heavenly and divine things, was her un-
aried and delightful exerciſe; and often when ſhe
ſed the fire burned, which made her meditations to
very ſweet.

Her attainments in religion were very high, and al-
oſt ſingular; and her trials were alſo very great, and
me of them almoſt uncommon.—She never was in her
oper element, but when the Lord ſmiled on her ta-
rnacle, which was often her happy ſituation: But
nerally, after ſignal manifeſtations of divine love, and
nſible enjoyments of communion with God, the Lord
ther ſuddenly withdrew, or ſome trial or difficulty
me in her way to keep her humble; and many times
meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet her, *leſt ſhe
ould be exalted above meaſure.* This was always mat-
r of deep exerciſe to her; and made her quite unhap-
y till the Lord returned in love to her ſoul.

She was ſtrongly impreſſed to commit to writing ſome
ccount of the Lord's gracious dealing to her ſoul;
ut much afraid, leſt any thing ſhe had experienced, or
ight ſay about it, would but diſhonour him, and be
injury to religion, which ſhe was always very tender
f.—Her mind, however, was ſo much impreſſed to the
uty, that ſhe at laſt prevailed upon herſelf to eſſay it,
ut kept what ſhe had committed to writing a profound
ecret, till the year 1756, when ſhe was ſeized with a
evere fever, and ſomewhat apprehenſive that it might
ſſue in death; ſhe then acquainted Mr. Cock, under
hoſe miniſtry ſhe then was, what ſhe had done, and
ven ſhewed him her papers. Mr. Cock, on peruſing
hem, encouraged her in her deſign; deſired her, on
er recovery, which he expected, to finiſh them; and,
s ſhe acquaints us herſelf, was at ſome pains to learn
er to write with more accuracy.

In the month of Auguſt 1757, ſhe was ſeized with
odily trouble, which continued to increaſe for ſome
months: and ſo accute and ſharp did it become, againſt
he month of December following, that her wholeBody
was exceedingly ſore pained with ſtitches, to ſuch a de-
gree, as if ſo many darts had been ſtuck into it, and

left remaining there. In this pitiful condition, physicians were of no avail: all the means that were used for her relief, rather increased than alleviated her pain *. —Thus she continued, bound with cords of affliction, in a greater or lesser measure, all the remaining days of her life, which was about thirteen years and three months.

She had not only several presages of the approach of this indisposition, but certain evidences of its being a lengthened-out rod.—During this long period of sore distress, which she bore with unexamplary patience, resignation, and submission to the divine will, she was not altogether without her trials; though the greatest part of it was a time of singular manifestations of the love of God to her soul, by which she was strengthened and encouraged to bear up under whatever the Lord saw meet to measure out for her in the world.

While she was thus confined to the house, and mostly to her bed, for such a number of years, it was her study to spend her time in the best manner she could. Reading, meditation, prayer, spiritual converse with those that visited her, and keeping up an epistolary correspondence, on religious matters, with some select friends and acquaintances, ingrossed the most part of her time.—She had a singularly pious turn of mind; could talk with remarkable freedom and distinctness on religious subjects, and had a very great pleasure therein: She was also well acquainted with vital religion, and the power and efficacy of divine grace upon her heart.

In these years of trouble and confinement, she was visited by great numbers, both of ministers and private Christians, and some of these from a considerable distance.—She improved these opportunities not only in hearing instruction from them, but also in giving very wholesome advices in her turn, especially to young people; which had often such a good effect, as gained their affection entirely to her, to that degree, that they would communicate more of their mind and inward case to her, than they would do to the nearest relations.

* Memoirs, p. 89, 93.

She had a peculiar talent of delivering her ſentiments in any religious point, particularly of adapting herſelf to the caſe of exerciſed perſons; and always ready to comfort them with theſe conſolations with which ſhe herſelf was comforted, when ſhe was in a condition to ſpeak to them: But, ſhe was often, through weakneſs, and being ſubject to fainting, unable to ſpeak.

She was never more in her element, than when pouring out her ſupplications at the throne of grace: ſhe was often there on her own account, and frequently employed, even by experienced Chriſtians, to ſpread out their caſe before the Lord, which was no ſmall part of her exerciſe; and always, when ſo employed, got ſomething of importance to communicate to them.—She very frequently ſaid, that when ſhe had errands for others to the throne, ſhe always got ſomething to herſelf: But was always certain, that when ſhe was admitted to the neareſt acceſs, and enjoyed the greateſt familiarity with God, ſhe might lay her account with being ſeverely aſſaulted by the enemy.

It was always her ardent deſire to have the love of God, above every other thing, impreſſed upon her ſoul; and, about three weeks before her death, ſhe was obſerved to forget many other things, and had *that* as the principal object of her converſation.—Her bodily trouble increaſed, more than ordinary, for about ten days before her death. The night preceding her diſſolution, when three or four perſons had come to enquire for her, ſhe deſired a Chriſtian acquaintance to pray for a ſafe paſſage to her into the land of glory. He ſignified to her, that he did not expect her departure to be ſo near: But ſhe inſiſted on her requeſt.—After he had gone about prayer, he aſked her, What ſhe now thought of Chriſt? To which ſhe replied, "That Chriſt is my Re-"deemer, my ſtrength, my fortreſs, my ſhield, my por-"tion, my ſalvation, my glory, my everlaſting all, *&c.*"

She ſlept but very little through the whole night; but ſaid to thoſe who attended her, that ſhe had ſolid and agreeable meditations on her bleſſed Lord. She ſpoke with elevated pleaſure of that ſcripture, with which our Lord comforted his diſciples, John xiv. 2, 3.

I go to prepare a place for you;—but I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. She ſeveral times repeated theſe words, "I think he is on his way."—She quoted theſe words, Pſalm xlv. 15, with a holy triumph,

They ſhall be brought with gladneſs great,
And mirth on every ſide,
Into the palace of the King,
And there they ſhall abide.

Her natural weakneſs continued ſtill to increaſe, till it became at laſt very difficult to hear what ſhe ſaid: She was overheard to ſay, with a very low broken voice, among her laſt words that were underſtood, "O lovely "Jeſus!—O precious ſalvation!—O bleſſed inheritance!"

About a quarter after ſix o'clock in the morning, on Saturday the 22d of September 1770, ſhe paid the debt to nature, in the 48th year of her age, and fell aſleep in the Lord, with the greateſt compoſure, and without the leaſt emotion, juſt as if ſhe had ſlept away in himſelf, it having been difficult, for thoſe who were preſent, to know preciſely when ſhe breathed her laſt.——So much ſhall ſuffice for a ſhort account of the Author of the following Memoirs.

It only now remains that the reader be acquainted, that the following Memoirs are carefully printed from the original manuſcript copy; the firſt, and greateſt part of it, wrote by the Author's own hand, and the ſequel, after ſhe became unable to write, dictated by herſelf, and wrote under her own eye, by an intimate acquaintance, ſtill in life.—The publication of them hath been often earneſtly ſolicited for ſince her death; but purpoſely delayed, in expectation that the Rev. Mr. Cock, under whoſe miniſtry ſhe lived for ſeveral years, and who had frequent opportunities of ſeeing and converſing with her, during the courſe of her long trouble, would have wrote the Preface, and given a more full and particular account of her, as ſhe had often communicated her mind to him both fully and freely.—But

e going to America has prevented the public of this ; r, after waiting so long, nothing of this nature has ome to hand, though desired, and also wrote for.

As a great part of her Christian experience, during r thirteen years illness, is contained in the religious tters she wrote to some select friends and acquaint- ces, we have subjoined to the following Memoirs, a llection of forty-seven of these Letters, being all that e were in possession of.

The reader of the following Memoirs is not to expect have his ear tickled with a flow of fine words and e- gant diction ; though her language, and manner of pression, all things considered, is very far from being spicable : But, if the reader be a person, any way quainted with the power and efficacy of divine grace on his own heart, he may expect to find what is vastly referable ; even the genuine sentiments of a pious soul, ccessfully wrestling against sin, and the temptations Satan, and deeply exercised to true godliness ; and is will prove, by the divine blessing, solid food to his ul, and be a mean of inflaming his heart with love to e blessed Redeemer, who condescends to vouchsafe his ndness to any of the fallen tribe.

Upon the whole, it may with propriety be said, that ARION LAIRD was a striking instance of the reality, ower, and efficacy of religion : And as such singular stances are but very rare, we shall conclude with an necdote of another very religious woman, who died a tle after her, in full assurance, above fifty miles dis- nce from her. The minister of the place paid her a sit on her death-bed, and gives the following account her. " Last week, says he, a member of this con- gregation died triumphantly. She told me, that she had no more ado but die ; that all the promises in the Bible were on her side ; and that the Spirit of God had put them into her heart. She, at my de- sire, repeated severals of them : my soul was refresh- ed to hear her.—I asked her whether we should pray or praise ? She said, *Praise, praise!*—Her last words

" were, *Come, Lord Jesus; for I am now ready.*—O
" that we may have such a passage, says he, by know-
" ing him ourselves."

That a careful perusal of the following MEMOIRS and LETTERS, may have the happy tendency to stir up many to a serious concern of soul about vital and practical godliness, is the sincere desire of

GLASGOW, Dec. 24. 1774. } THE EDITOR.

THE PREFACE.

WHEN I began first to write an account of the Lord's gracious dealings with my soul, so far as I can remember, I had not the smallest intention to let any person know of it, till the year 1756, when I was seized wit a sore fever, and had no hopes of a recovery therefrom then I wist not well what to do with them, being uncer tain into whose hands they might fall.—After revolving the matter sometime in my own mind, I prevailed upon myself to acquaint Mr Cock of them. So soon as he heard of them, he was very desirous to see what I had wrote: I signified to him, that if he would let none know of it, he should see them.*

When conversing, at this time, with Mr Cock, about what I had written, I communicated also to him, that the Lord bore it in on my spirit, by an irresistable gale of his word and spirit, that he would recover me again from my present distress, and that I must return back again to the world, to be tossed with new winds and waves. This brought me into very great grief for many days, least I should become a wound to religion.—In this very melancholly situation sleep became a terror to me: for, when sleep overtook me, I dreamed I had committed some sin whereby God was highly dishonoured. O the distress this brought me into!—I thought they were well off that got away to heaven without leaving a blot on religion.

Many a time I wondered at the wisdom of God in this matter, in keeping it a secret from me, that he would turn me back into the wilderness again, till I told our minister, Mr Cock: and, in this, I found outward advantages: for he taught me the manner of writing, as carefully as I had been his own child.

* She was at this time under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Cock, then minister at Crawfurd's-dyke, near Greenock.

When Mr Gock came to see me again, I signified to him that the Lord would yet deliver me out of this trouble.— He asked me how I came to know that; for, said he, ye are not yet delivered. I told him, that I was persuaded of it.—He said to me, it may be Satan will tempt you to think your deliverance not a mercy. I found this to be true: and I often found the secret of the Lord with him.

Before I proceed to narrate what of the Lord's goodness he has been pleased to vouchsafe unto me, I would here beg leave to suggest two advices to any into whose hands these writings may come.

1. *Do not entertain too high thoughts of me, as if there were any extrinsic excellency naturally in me above others. What induces me to suggest this advice, is, when I have been telling somewhat that God hath done for my soul they would fall a commending me, as though it had been some good thing in me, beyond others, that procured these things to me. O this grieved me to see the crown pulled off the head of the glorious Redeemer, and set upon the head of sinful self. O Sirs, wonder not at me, but admire the electing love of God upon the like of me, a vile worm. O saints, admire his love, and wonder at the matchless glory and excellency of his person. O the freedom of his grace! O the unsearchable riches of Christ! O the glorious contrivance of redemption through his death and sacrifice! O that I could love him, and praise him more!*

2. *Another advice I would give to them who may have access to see my writings, is this: if they think it will be for the advancing God's honour, and the real good of others, to let them go abroad into the world; I say, if it be judged for the glory of God, and the advantage of others, let them go.——O that I could commend his love to others! and, O that all that hears thereof may fall in love with our lovely Lord Christ!—O Sirs, meditate much upon his love. Many a sweet hour have I had in meditating on his matchless loving-kindness. O it is a sweet field to travel in, till the day break, and all the shadows flee away.*

MARION LAIRD.

MEMOIRES OF *MARION LAIRD.*

PERIOD FIRST.

Containing an account when the Lord first began to take a saving dealing with her, the means by which he effected it, the manner of the Spirit's operation, and the gracious effect thereof; together with an account of the religious connexions she made choice of, with the grounds and reasons which induced her thereto.

IT has been the practice of saints, both in former and later times, not only to keep in memory, but oft-times to commit unto writing, the many instances of the Lord's goodness manifested to them, for the honour of God, to evince the reality of religion, and to edify and comfort fellow-saints. This we find exemplified by the practice of the man according to God's own heart; Psal. lxvi. 16. *Come here all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.* It hath seemed good unto me also to attempt some thing this way.—O that I could so record what God hath done for my soul, as that he may get the glory of all, and that I might take shame and confusion of face to myself; and that others, who hear of these

things might fall in love with glorious Chriſt, and holineſs.—O what great reaſon have I to wonder and admire at the goodneſs of the Lord, that did not ſend me to the pit in the pitiful condition of ſeeking juſtification by the works of the law, never remembering what I was by nature! In this unhappy ſituation I remained until it pleaſed the Lord to ſend Mr. Smiton into the Weſt country, in the year 1740. upon the laſt Sabbath of March, I being then about fourteen years of age.

Mr. Smiton, at that time, preached on theſe words, *We all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord*, &c. He gave us ſome marks of theſe who had ſeen the glory of the Lord in the glaſs of ordinances; and immediately it was impreſſed on my ſpirit that I had never ſeen his glory.—He Prefaced on the 80th Pſalm; and gave us a very large and free offer of Chriſt to captive ſinners. He called the whole earth, from the riſing of the ſun, unto his going down, to embrace the Saviour; then I was ſure he called me, with the reſt, to come to Chriſt. After urging the call, he ſaid "Ye have gotten a call to come to Chriſt this day, and if ye refuſe to come, where will ye flee when Chriſt cometh to take vengeance on them who have not obeyed his voices in the goſpel?" He moreover added, "If *they that deſpiſed Moſes law, died without mercy, how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhall they be thought worthy of, who have troden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? There remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries*: namely, the deſpiſers of Chriſt."—He alſo ſpoke of the Lord's having a *controverſy* with the inhabitants of the land: and amongſt the many ſins he ſpoke of, he mentioned the breach of our ſolemn covenants, the burying and burning of them, and the blood of the Lord's remnant that was ſhed, in this nation, for their adherence to the

Lord's truths and cauſe, and for which the Lord hath controverſy with the inhabitants of the land.—Now, thought I never heard of theſe things before; and hey grieved me all that week.

I heard him preach the next Sabbath-day. He gave us again a very large offer of Chriſt. He ſaid, "I in "the name and authority of my great Lord and maſter, "on the firſt Sabbath of April, 1740 years, make of-"fer of Chriſt to every man and woman here; and it "will be recorded in heaven, whether ye embrace him "or not."—O this was a witneſs in my heart that I had gotten an offer of Chriſt, but had not embraced him. And this remained a queſtion with me, what would become of them that had never ſeen glorious Chriſt?—When I was meditating on this, all of a ſudden my fallen depraved ſtate was more fully laid open to me than what I could well conceive of. I was filled with wonder and amazement, at the dreadful wickedneſs of my heart, which was like a hole full of ſerpents when the light of the law did ſhine upon it. The law ſaid, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*—Before this time, I thought I had a good enough heart; *But when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died:* and now I ſaw my heart to be *enmity againſt God;* I ſaw I had loſt that noble end for which I was created, namely, to *live to the glory of God.* Now I ſaw myſelf to be a *condemned criminal;* but I knew not the day of my execution. I thought that there was nothing between me and hell, but the brittle thread of natural life, which could ſoon be broken at God's command. *I remembered God, and was troubled.* I was filled with toſſings to the dawning of the day. And when it was morning, the cry was, when will it be night? and at night, when will it be morning? *The arrows of the Almighty did drink up my ſpirits.* My caſe, at this time, was ſimilar to that of the Pſalmiſt, mentioned in Pſalm cxvi. 3.

Of death the cords and ſorrows did
About me compaſs round;
The pains of hell took hold of me,
I grief and trouble found.

One time I went out into the fields, ſo filled with fear of divine wrath, that I thought where will I flee when the Lord will come to take vengeance on them who have not received Chriſt in the offer of the goſpel. I thought, when Chriſt would come to take vengeance on them that had not obeyed his voice in the goſpel, my language would be to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on me, and cover me from the wrath of God and of the Lamb.—O this ſin of deſpiſing glorious Chriſt lay heavy on my conſcience. And in this dreadful confuſion, I durſt not ſleep, leaſt I had awakened in everlaſting flames.

In this perplexed ſituation, I took my Bible in my hand; but, at this time, it was all alike to me: the firſt words I looked upon were Pſalm cxl. 7. *O God the Lord, the ſtrength of my ſalvation; thou haſt covered my head in the day of battle.* Theſe words were ſweet to me for a little time: but thoughts ſoon aroſe in my mind, that they were not for ſuch a wretched miſerable ſinner as I am, who deſerved nothing but hell and wrath.—I reſolved that I would cry for mercy while I was out of the place where his mercy is clean gone: but thought the Lord might bid me *go to the Gods whom I had ſerved*, and *let them deliver me;* becauſe when the Lord cryed, I would not hear: although he cryed to me by the rods of affliction and by his voice in the goſpel, I would not liſten; ſo they cryed, and *I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

At this time, there was a miniſter of the Aſſociate Preſbytery to preach in our bounds, which was both joy and grief to me; for I thought I would get another offer of glorious Chriſt, and afraid that would heighten my condemnation in hell. The miniſter prefaced on theſe

words, *I waited for the Lord my God*, &c. Pſal. xl. 1. He obſerved, "That it was often the lot of the Lord's children to be in the deepeſt, and fearfulleſt pits; but the Lord ſeaſonably delivers them, and puts a new ſong in their mouth, their God to magnify. *A bruiſed reed he will not break, and the ſmoking flax he ſhall not quench: being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun the good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Chriſt.*"—Theſe words gave me a little hope: and the miniſter ſpoke well to my caſe; for, at this time, I knew ſo little of God, or his way of dealing with ſinners, that I thought none ever was in my ſituation.—O but the burden of guilt lay heavy on my conſcience! whether I went out or in it always haunted me. So perplexed was I, that at one time I drew this helliſh concluſion, I even wiſhed I had never known the burden of ſin: for I even thought it a wonder that it ſank me not down to the pit.—But, O the amazing goodneſs and condeſcendence of God, who ſupported me with his precious word.

At this diſtreſſed time, theſe words were borne in on my mind, 1 Cor. ii. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But, alas! I could not believe that God had thoughts of love to me. But then theſe words came into my mind with power, John iii. 30. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* O what ſorrow did this fill my heart with! for I could not believe; and to have the wrath of God abiding on me, O how did this pierce my ſoul!—I found however a ſtrong biaſs in my heart to have life by the works of the law.——O the pride of my heart, it would not bow to the ſovereign grace of God.

By this time, my natural ſtrength was much gone; for the arrows of the Almighty drank up my ſpirits. But this was not all; for, at this time, I fell into a

ſevere fever, which I imagined would be death to me, and hell after death. *My heart he did bring down with grief, becauſe I wrought rebelliouſly againſt him* —O the confuſion I was in during the time of this fever! I cannot tell how little I ſleeped, leſt I had awakened in everlaſting flames.

There came a young woman of my acquaintance to ſee me in my trouble: I told her ſomething of my caſe. She exhorted me to eſſay believing on the Son of God. To which I replied, I can no more believe then I can remove mountains. She farther ſaid, So might the man ſay, that had the withered hand; I cannot ſtretch it out: but he obeyed the command; and power came along with it. So do ye.—To which I replied, I ſee the holy law of God purſuing me for the debt of perfect obedience.

When I was thus reaſoning with myſelf, theſe words were borne in on my mind with power, Rom. x. 4. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth:* With theſe words, Job xix. 25. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold him, and not another.* O wonderful love! O that I could praiſe him for his love!

O that men to the Lord would give
Praiſe for his goodneſs then;
And for his works of wonder done,
Unto the ſons of men.

For he hath delivered my diſtreſſed ſoul from death.—O with what joy was my ſoul filled! I had now peace of conſcience and joy in believing.

Before this, I feared that death would come to me, armed with the ſting of death, which is ſin, to drag my ſoul to the priſon of hell: but now I beheld death to be a vanquiſhed enemy; for I ſaw that glorious Chriſt has paved the way to heaven and glory for me. *Thanks*

e to God, which giveth me the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Thus the Lord led me to Mount Sinai, and diſcovered to me his aweful majeſty, and that he is a conſuming fire out of Chriſt: and then to Mount Sion, and ſhewed me the glory of his grace.—The Lord wrought this deliverance for me in the year 1741. I was not only immediately healed in ſpirit, but in body alſo; for the Lord rebuked the fever, and it abated. Now, O how ſweet was Chriſt to my ſoul! I could then have rolled theſe words as a ſweet morſel under my tongue, Rom. viii. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* Now it came to be a piece of ſerious exerciſe with me, to know whether it was my duty to continue in communion with the miniſters of this church, when I conſider the backſlidings of the preſent judicatories, in their exerciſing a lordly power and authority over the heritage of God, by obtruding miniſters upon the flock of Chriſt, in all corners of the land; ſo that they have ſcattered the Lord's flock, and made them wander on the mountains in the dark and cloudy day; and obliged Chriſt's ſheep, who know his voice, but will not follow a ſtranger, to wander from ſea to ſea, and from one part of the land to another, to hear the pure and good word of the Lord, and many times could not find it.

And, moreover, of late, the Sabbath of the Lord hath been publicly profaned, by the moſt part of miniſters, by their reading the Act of Parliament concerning Capt. *John Porteous;* by the reading of which, the alone headſhip and ſovereignty of the Lord Jeſus over his church, has been invaded; and his free and independent kingdom is likewiſe given up with.—And having likewiſe ſubordinated their eccleſiaſtical meetings, in appointing faſts and thankſgivings, to the civil powers, whereby the Redeemer's crown has been profaned and caſt down to the ground.——Now, if it

be the duty of the flock of Christ to flee from, and not to hear strangers, hirelings, and such as the scripture characterizes to be wolves, thieves, and robbers; then I cannot see it my duty to hear them. See Rom. x. 15. *How shall they preach except they be sent?*——*Yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord,* Jer. xxiii. 32.

PERIOD SECOND.

Containing an account of some dreadful assaults she met with from Satan, her deep exercise under them, and the remarkable deliverances the Lord wrought for her, and the grateful sense she had of his love and favour: together with her concern for the public interest of Zion.

AFTER this the Lord hid his face, and a cloud covered my soul. One night, when I was at prayer, the enemy assaulted me with this temptation, that although I was willing to have salvation through Christ, that Christ was not willing to give it me, though it be a fruit of Christ's willingness to make a sinner willing to embrace himself.—At this time I was ignorant of Satan's devices; and charged the sins of his temptations on myself.

I was, at this time, perusing a valuable little book, intitled, *The meek Christian under the smarting rod:* where I saw an account of a woman who was in affliction, and one asked her, If she was willing to die? She said, I am at God's disposal. When I saw that she was willing to be disposed of by God, O how did this grieve me! For, when I was in the fever, formerly spoken of, I was more desirous to die than to live, whenever the Lord was pleased to give visitations of his love to me, *having a desire to be with Christ, which is far better.* But when I thought on the dreadful

nmity of my heart, and ſuch ſinful thoughts of glo-ious Chriſt, as to think that he is not willing to give ne ſalvation; when I compared theſe ſins of mine to-ether with the pride and emnity of my heart, ſuch ard thoughts of glorious Chriſt, I thought they would nake up and be guilty of the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. —O with what grief did this fill my ſoul! I cryed to God by prayer, that he would pardon mine iniquities, nd forgive my ſins: but I found my heart as an ada-nant ſtone, not ſuitably affected for the diſhonour I ad done to God.

Now, in this perplexity, I fell a ſearching the ſcrip-ures to ſee what the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is; nd I ſaw, from Heb. x. 29. that it is a *treading under oot the Son of God, and accounting the blood of the cove-nant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing, and doing deſpite unto the Spirit of grace.* Of this however I was not very clear to charge myſelf with. But when I read Hebrews vi. 5. *And having taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,* then I thought this was my caſe; and I concluded all was but a common work of the Spirit that I had experienced; and I was ſore afraid I had committed that ſin. Now I thought, that if I had committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indigna-tion, which ſhall devour the adverſaries.* O how did this fill my ſoul with horror! And Satan violently aſ-ſaulted me to take away my own life, ſeeing there was no mercy for me: at this time I was ignorant of Satan's fiery darts; but charged them on myſelf, which ſtill increaſed my trouble. I ſtill abhorred the temptation: but when I was brought to great extremity, it pleaſed the merciful God to rebuke the tempter. And he ſaid unto me, *Fear not,—I have the keys of hell and of death,* Rev. i. 17, 18. Glory be to God for his faithfulneſs; who did *not ſuffer me to be tempted, above what he made*

me able to bear; but, with the temptation, made a way of escape: and he made me to cry, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief*, Mark ix. 24. Now, it pleased the Lord to manifest himself to me favourably; and I see that my Lord hath the keys of hell and of death in his hand; and that he hath said unto me, *Fear not*. O what is heaven; and what is that state of glory reserved for the saints, when but a blink of him is so sweet! O what will it be to be ever with the Lord! What we feel and taste here, by faith, is a part of heaven's glory: but yet heaven will be an unspeakable surprisal to us when we come thither, for all that. O that I could love him who is *altogether lovely!* O! see such a beauty in glorious Christ, that it darkens and clouds all other things. I see no beauty in the worth the glorying in; but in my altogether lovely Lord. O that I could love him more! It grieves me I can love him so little, when he is worthy of so much love. I think the presence of God is of a very remarkable transforming nature; and a change of spirit follows it. These things are found to be marvellous assimulating. The sight of God, the felt presence of God, is as a fire which quickly assimulates what is put in it into its own likeness, 2 Cor. iii. 18. They are said to be *changed from glory to glory*. It always elevates the mind; and it is of a very humbling nature. Neither the terrors of the law, nor the fire of hell, ever humbled me so much, as a sight of the glory of God. O that I could give him the glory of all. Wo is me for this idol of self; it would pull the crown off my Lord's head, and set it on the head of sinful self: but O that he may wear the crown and the throne of my heart for ever. O this indwelling sin! this evil is always with me: the constant residence of it in my heart and nature. *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

On the back of this, Satan assaulted me again, with a new temptation. He set the sins of my youth in my

ght, as if they had all been written in a libel; and old me, that they were ſo numerous, and of ſuch a enous nature, that God would not pardon them: which I was ſore perplexed. I then went to God prayer, and cryed to him, *O let not the errors of my uth, nor ſins remembered be.* — At which the Lord wonderfully condeſcended to bring me, as it were, nigh o his ſeat, and filled my mouth with arguments, and llowed me to plead with him as a man doth with a reconciled friend. And I think he ſaid unto me, *Come now, let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord; though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as ſnow: though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool,* Iſa. i. 18.

About this time I heard Mr. Ballantine preach. He obſerved, among other things, "That the Lord made uſe of Satan to rub the ruſt off the graces of his people; and to learn them to make uſe of their ſpiritual armour." And he moreover ſaid, "Ye that are toſſed with tempeſts, read for your comfort Rev. ii. 10. *Behold the devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, that ye may be tried; and ye ſhall have tribulation ten days:* Take comfort, ſaid he, it is but for a limited time, *ten days.*"—This note was very refreſhing to me.

Some time after my former happy out-gate from my above-mentioned diſtreſs, I found the clouds returning after the rain, and darkneſs covered my ſoul; and the Lord hid his face, and I was troubled; and a multitude of vain thoughts filled my heart, and eſtrangement took place between me and God: and when I went to prayer, I had no liberty; but came away crying, *O wretched* woman *that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and death!*

On the Sabbath day thereafter, I heard Mr. Clarkſon preach. He Prefaced on Pſalm cxix. 113. *I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love.* Theſe words were very refreſhing to me; for he held it to be a mark of a child of God, to *hate vain thoughts*, becauſe they are diſhonouring to God. And although I could not

ſay, *I love thy law*, I was ſure that I *hated* [illegible] *thoughts*; for they were my burden.

Next Sabbath he preached at Croſehill, near [illegible]gow. When he came up to the tent in the morning he aſked us, what we thought of Chriſt: and ſaid, if your thoughts are of Chriſt, ſo is God's thoughts of you. O but this queſtion grieved me ſore: for I thought if God had no higher thoughts of me, than I had of glorious Chriſt, they were but mean and low thoughts. He preached on Job xxiii. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him!* But the Lord hid his face; and theſe words always haunted my mind, *Let death upon them ſeize, and down let them go quick into hell.* Whereupon I thought theſe with whom I had joined ſweet counſel to God's houſe, and were in friendly ſociety with, would come with Chriſt, to paſs the ſentence of condemnation againſt me, although they were the beloved of my ſoul. Becauſe of the enemy's oppreſſion, I went mourning, till my natural ſtrength was much gone.

One day I was going into a room to ſweep it, and I ſaw a Bible in it: I took the Bible in my hand to read my own doom, as I thought; but the firſt words I looked on were theſe, *Caſt thy burden on the Lord*: but I paſſed on to ſeek the threatening; but the next words I looked on were theſe, *Becauſe they never change, therefore they fear not God.* When I read theſe words, the Lord ſo eminently ſhined on his own word, that he made me to ſee that a believer's life was a changeable life; a life of abſence and preſence.

After ſome time I found a cloud ariſing, which I may ſay, as the Prophet in another caſe, that at firſt it was as a man's hand; but gradually increaſed, till it covered the whole heavens, as it were, and hid from me the refreſhing and lightſome rays of the Sun of Righteouſneſs: and it was a cloud of the longeſt continuance that ever I as yet met with in the houſe of my pilgrimage. So great a deadneſs ſeized my ſoul, that

could not think that ſuch ſins and grace could dwell together; upon which I razed the very foundations.

About this time I heard Mr. Smiton preach. He inſiſted very much upon the law; and I was ſore afraid to hear the law preached, when I could not ſee my intereſt in glorious Chriſt. Whereupon Satan, after all, did ſo hotly purſue me, that he violently ſuggeſted to my ſoul, that God would ſuddenly deſtroy me, as with a thunder-clop; which filled me with great fear, and ſore pain; inſomuch, that I thought I was under the ſentence of condemnation, and had loſt all right to any of God's mercies. And the enemy ſtrongly ſuggeſted to me, that I ſhould not eat, becauſe I had no right to food; or if I did, the wrath of God would go down with it. This filled my heart with grief and ſorrow.

At one time when we were going to take ſome food, a young man aſked a bleſſing: he ſpoke a little upon theſe words, Iſaiah xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe.* Upon which I thought, O! are there ſuch a word as that, that calls all the ends of the earth to look to God, and be ſaved? I reaſoned with myſelf, Surely that word takes me in; for I would have been glad to be ſaved both from ſin and wrath. The enemy however, ſtrongly ſuggeſted to me, that though I had the *external* call, that I would never get the *internal* call of God's Spirit; and without that the external will not do. Oh! I was ſore grieved at the melancholy thoughts of having deceived myſelf: ſo rude was I, and as a beaſt before him, that I could not, in this dark hour, live by faith. I was loth to call all that ever I met with a deluſion; yet ſo ſtrong was the temptation, I could not read my evidences, or a title to his favour.

One time I took my Bible in my hand; but I could not find any comfort in it. Whereupon the reſtleſs enemy did ſorely aſſault me to burn it in the fire, ſeeing I could find no comfort in it. To this onſet I was

made to ſay, by the Lord's pity, It hath been refreſhing to me before now; and I held it with both my hands: and was made to ſay, through the Lord's ſtrength, I never will do it.—At this time I would often wonder to ſee any laugh, that I thought had not an intereſt in glorious Chriſt, it was ſuch a burden to me to think of wanting him.

On the Sabbath day I was much burdened with indwelling ſins: And, O this is my miſery and burden, *When I would do good evil is preſent with me.* When I deſign to draw near to God, and promiſe myſelf comfort and redreſs in communion with him, then is evil preſent. O! could I but enjoy my freedom from it in the ſeaſons of duty, what a comfort would that be! but then is the ſpecial ſeaſon of its operation.—Sometimes I had liberty in our ſociety, when I could have none in ſecret; and this made me to think I was nothing but a hypocrite: But this day I could not get liberty either in public or private.

On the Sabbath evening, after our meeting was parted, I went to the fields for prayer, very much burdened with my ſin; ſaying, with the apoſtle, *O wretched woman that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and death?* O Lord, I long for victory over it, and that through the blood of the Lamb.——Now, the Lord dealt kindly with me, and rebuked Satan; and he has never ſuffered me to be tempted above meaſure, but has, to this day, always with the temptations, given a way of eſcape.

When I went to prayer, the Lord ſo ſhined upon his own word, Iſa. xii. 1, 2. *Though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedſt me. Behold, God is my ſalvation; I will truſt, and not be afraid.* O with what joy did this fill my ſoul! I was filled with peace, joy, and comfort.—In this ſeaſon of duty, I got all ſcruples and fears baniſhed away: Now I got my love inflamed; renewed care; deep abaſements; increaſe of ſtrength; a deſire to be

ith the Lord; and improved mortification to the rld.

Some time after this, my ſpirit was overwhelmed thin me, on account of the Church, and for a depart- g God and glory. Alas! what matter of grief is it ſee ſo few owning a covenanted-work of reformation! long as our church clave to theſe our covenants, it ll out with them as it did with king Aſa, 2 Chron. . 2. that *the Lord was with them, while they were ith him.* But, alas! many are going off theſe foun- ations, both as to doctrine and government. The dicatories of this church are ſo far infatuated, as to ruſt out, from church communion and ſociety, faith- l watchmen, becauſe of their faithfulneſs.—This was atter of great grief to my ſoul: and it cauſed Chriſt's eep, who know his voice, but will not follow a ranger, to wander from ſea to ſea, and from one part f the land to another, to hear the pure and ſavoury ord of the Lord: and for no other reaſon, but be- auſe of their non-ſubmiſſion to intruders and hirelings, nd ſuch as the ſcripture denominates to be wolves, hieves, and robbers. With many ſuch our pulpits are lled.—And many alſo were the provocations of ſons nd of daughters.—And our ſolemn covenants, where- with this land had bound themſelves to the Lord, were oo little regarded, by a great many: I myſelf was witneſs to hear one of our miniſters ſay, "We of this " generation had nothing to do with theſe old co- " venants."

All this filled my ſoul with fear, leſt glorious Chriſt ſhould be provoked not to return again to poor Scot- land. And if he would not return with a preached goſpel in plenty and purity, we had been the cruel ge- neration who had ſinned him away from ourſelves, and poſterity.

One time, when much perplexed in ſpirit, I went to prayer; and the Lord was graciouſly pleaſed to give me ſome ſure grounds of hope. I got leave to lay

claim to him as a covenant-keeping God, although we be a covenant-breaking people. Ah! when theſe covenants ſhall be revived, that ſhall be like a reſurrection from the dead: they were buried in diſhonour; but they ſhall riſe in honour. My ſoul longs to ſee it.—The Lord has taken poſſeſſion of the *outmoſt ends of the earth for his poſſeſſion*, Pſal. ii. 8. to be the Father's gift to the Mediator: it is his own ground by gift, conqueſt, infeftment, and poſſeſſion. And the Lord bore in on my mind, by an irreſiſtible gale of his Spirit, that he would yet ſay concerning this part of Sion, *Here is my reſt*, and *here I deſire to dwell.* At which my ſoul cryed, So be it, O Lord, although thou ſhouldſt caſt us into a ſeven times heated furnace of affliction.

Another thing that ſtill burdened my ſpirit was, the want of a faithful miniſter amongſt us, to break the bread of life to our ſouls. One day after this, our ſocieties appointed a day of faſting: they deſired to humble themſelves for the many diſhonours done to God, by themſelves and others; and likewiſe deſired that the Lord would remove all ſtumbling-blocks out of the way of our getting a faithful ſhepherd among us.—And here I deſire to remark, to the glory of the bleſſed hearer of prayer, that he ſent his word with ſuch power and life into my ſoul, that it made me believe that our Lord beholds his church with an affectionate concern; for the words were, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt; and I have heard their groanings*, Acts vii. 34. *And I will give you paſtors according to mine heart, ſaith the Lord.* Now I got a ground of hope to believe that God would give us paſtors in his due time. And I never got leave to raze the foundation of my hope: but one time a very contrary providence ſeemed to counteract the accompliſhment of the promiſes; then I thought I had believed in vain.—Now, I was afraid that all I had met with was a deluſion of Satan: but when I was razing the grounds of my hope, the Lord ſo eminently ſhin-

ed upon his word, Isa. lxvi. 5. *Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy.* This revived my hope again, to wait upon the Lord, till he should accomplish his promises; which he did about two years thereafter. And, O but the mercy that cometh to a Christian, through a promise, is sweet.

Some time after this, I heard that the sacrament was to be dispensed at Stirling; at which I was very glad: and many a day before it came, these words haunted my mind, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. *Put away the strange gods that are among you, and arise and go up to Bethel:* together with these words, *So much the more as you see the day approaching.* But I desired to put the work back into the Lord's own hand. I looked for a refreshing time at the sacrament; and it had been so to me before. But upon the Saturday my heart-plagues were so strongly raging within my soul, that I was afraid all that ever I met with was but a delusion of Satan: for my heart, I thought, was as hard as the ground I then sat upon; and was sore grieved at the thought of my having deceived myself: And my grief lasted till the Sabbath day. One of the ministers serving a table, spoke upon these words, *This is my Beloved; and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.* When I heard these words, I thought, O if I could apply them to myself; I would rather than ten thousand worlds. Whereupon the glorious hearer of prayer was pleased to give me my request; for then the Lord so shined upon these words, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend,* that I was made to say, O what wonderful love is this! Well may I say his love is not after the manner of man. O his love filled my soul with wonder, joy, and believing. I rejoiced with joy unspeakable; and arose and came to the table of the Lord. Mr. John Cliland served it; and he spoke on these words, *What is thy petition, queen Esther? and what is thy request? and it shall be granted thee.* He addressed himself to the communicants, and said, What is your request, communicants?

Is it your requeſt to get indwelling ſins ſubdued? To which I ſaid, Amen, with all my heart and ſoul: I earneſtly want to have my heart-plagues ſubdued, eſpecially that ſin of unbelief, by which I had ſo much diſhonoured God, and was afraid that I would diſhonour him again.—But then theſe words were borne in upon my mind with power, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *My grace is ſufficient for thee;* after which, my ſoul was filled with joy and peace in believing. Again, Mr. Cliland ſaid, "Communicants, ye are at the banquet of wine; what is your petition? have ye any petitions to put up for the Lord's cauſe and teſtimony, and for the goſpel to the poor Weſt of Scotland?" At which I was exceeding glad; for that had been often my petition before this time.—This ſolemnity happened in the month of June, 1743.

Here I deſire to remark, to the praiſe of the faithful God, who grants us our petitions, and the accompliſhment of the promiſes, that the giving of the promiſes occaſioneth much ſpiritual joy; and when the promiſe travelleth in birth, and bringeth forth, that occaſioneth much more ſpiritual comfort. O but it is a pleaſant matter to behold love making promiſes, and faithfulneſs accompliſhing them!

Yea, I remember will the works
Performed by the Lord:
The wonders done of old by thee,
I ſurely will record.

PERIOD THIRD.

Containing ſome account of what befel her under the miniſtry of Mr M'Cara. Her being ſeized with a lingering trouble, and what was both diſtreſſing and ſupporting to her therein: with her delivery therefrom.

IT pleaſed the Lord to give us a miniſter of the goſpel, which was to us great joy, and the accompliſhment of the promiſe to me. The firſt text that our miniſter, Mr. JOHN M'CARA, preached on was, Mat. xxii. 4. *All things are ready, come unto the marriage.* O this was a joyful day to me!—Now, I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord be it ſpoken, in hearing this miniſter's ſermons, the Lord was ſo condeſcending to me, as to diſcover Chriſt, and heaven, and glory, in ſuch a manner as filled me with wonder; and he aſſured me, that all my ſins were forgiven. O admirable free grace! O help me to praiſe him! Praiſe him, O my ſoul.—I thought I had ſinned him away from me; but, I ſee he will not ſtay away.

Although I got my former experiences confirmed by Mr. M'Cara's miniſtrations; yet I was ſuch a ſtranger to a life of faith, that whenever the Lord hid his face, I concluded all to be but a deluſion. I could not, in the dark hour, live by faith: but, whatever changes I had through the week, I got my caſe well ſpoken to on the Sabbath, by our miniſter.—For the moſt part, I had a clear ſummer of ſun-ſhine, till it pleaſed the Lord to lay his afflicting hand upon me, whereby I was laid under a long affliction; and all thought I was dying, except them who had the ſecret of the Lord with them; theſe told me, that *my ſickneſs was not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God*

might be glorified thereby.—It pleaſed the Lord to continue his wonted manifeſtations to me under my afflictions: and, by the preſence of Chriſt with me in the furnace, this wilderneſs of affliction, was made like the garden of the Lord. O pleaſant affliction when Chriſt's preſence is in it! This made me often to think, O what matter of a ſong of praiſe had I to ſing of in my afflictions!

One day as I was in meditation on David's ſong of *mercy* and *judgment*, Pſalm ci. 1.; I wondered how David could join *mercy* and *judgment* together, as matter of a ſong of praiſe to God; for I ſaw ſo much *mercy* in my afflictions, that I thought I had no ground to ſing of *judgment*, but all of *mercy*.—But at another time, when I was meditating on this, immediately it was impreſt on my ſpirit, had not God of his infinite goodneſs and mercy, execute *judgment* upon glorious Chriſt, I would never have had a ſong of mercy to ſing of, but all of judgment.—But, O what ſweet matter of a ſong was this to me, ſeeing judgment and juſtice was executed upon glorious Chriſt, in my law-room and ſtead! Then I thought I might ſweetly join mercy and judgment together, as matter of a ſong.

Though I enjoyed much of the Lord's countenance in this affliction; yet I had alſo my trials: One thing that burdened me much was the ſituation of my father's family, becauſe none of them I apprehended, were ſeeking after glorious Chriſt, but my father himſelf. Many a time I went to the throne of grace for them: and theſe words came into my mind, as the anſwer of my prayers, Jer. iii. 19. *But I ſaid, How ſhall I put thee among the children?* However, I muſtered up many objections againſt all grounds of hope for them. At length theſe words were borne in with power on my mind, *I will give them a name better than that of ſons or of daughters; and I will write upon them the new name of my God, and the name of the city of my God.*—This gave me a ground of hope, that the Lord would

ake a dealing with ſome of them; on which my diſ-
couragement evaniſhed for ſome time.

During this ſickneſs, I had much ground to be deep-
y humbled for my obſtinacy and rebellion againſt the
will of God. I could not attain to a ſubmiſſion to the
divine will. I longed exceedingly to be off the world,
where I might be admitted to the neareſt acceſs to my
Redeemer. O this unmortified heart-plague, ſelf! O
this ſinful ſelf, it greatly diſhonours God. O that I
could put God's glory in its room.—Surely it is as much
an act of grace, to be willing to live in obedience to
God's holy will, as to be willing to die when he calls
us to it. Then the breathings of my ſoul were, O that
my life were ſpent in his ſervice! A life ſpent in the
ſervice of God, and communion with him, is the moſt
comfortable and pleaſant life that any one can live in
this world. O that I could praiſe him for his love to
me, one of the vileſt worms.—In the time of my ſick-
neſs the Lord ſweetly manifeſted himſelf to me, which
made me to cry, O when ſhall the time of my pilgri-
mage, and the days of my baniſhment be finiſhed, that
I may get home to my Father's houſe!

In this ſickneſs, which was long and lingering, al-
though I had much ſweet communion with God; yet
I had alſo many preſſures in my ſoul: and, amidſt all
my downcaſtings, I had the roaring lion to graple with.
When the Lord hid his face, I was troubled; and the
enemy would perſuade me, that all that ever I met
with was a deluſion: upon which I razed the very
foundation; I could not, in this dark hour, live by
faith.—Upon which I told my Father, and deſired that
he would cry to God by prayer on my behalf. Accord-
ingly he went out to prayer; and I cryed to God out
of the depths: But I was afraid that God would not
hear our prayers; and this filled my heart with grief.
O that unworthy, ſinful, and wretched I, knew how
to commend glorious Chriſt for his love! For, when I
was at the point of giving over all hope, then Chriſt

came and ſtepping in ſweetly in theſe words, Gen. viii. 11. *And the dove came in to him in the evening: and, lo, in her mouth was an olive-leaf pluckt off: So Noah knew that the waters were abated.* O what ſweetneſs I found in theſe words! for I was perſuaded that my father would come in to me, with the olive-leaf of the promiſe, that the waters of the wrath of God were abated. And he came in with theſe words, Rev. iii. 12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the houſe of my God: and he ſhall go no more out.* O the condeſcendence of God, to ſtoop ſo low as to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me, after all I had done! After which, my ſoul was filled with joy and peace in believing; it was a joy unſpeakable and glorious, having now got good hope through grace, that though he was angry, yet now his anger was turned away, and he is become my ſalvation.—O what ground of rejoicing was this to me, to think of my new relation to God the Saviour.

After all, O what ſhall I ſay of my unmortified corruptions? I found my heart diſcontentedly riſing againſt God. *Surely I was as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke.* It was not, however, for the greatneſs of my afflictions; for I could ſay in all that ſea of ſorrow, there is not the leaſt drop of injuſtice done to me. But I thought every blaſt of ſore affliction would blow me into the harbour of glory, where I might enjoy my Lord without any interruption.—But in this I was miſtaken.

When the Lord turned me back into the wilderneſs again, O how diſcontentedly did my heart riſe againſt the will of God! O it is a wonder that the Lord did not caſt me into hell, for my rebellion againſt his ſovereign will. O I could not win to a ſubmiſſion to his will: but boldly and curiouſly ſearching into his ſecret will. But, O what ſhall I ſay of the wonderful condeſcendence of God to me?—O that I could commend his love to others.

PERIOD FOURTH.

iving an account of ſeveral trials and deliverances that ſhe met with after her recovery; together with what occurrences took place, during the time ſhe remained under Mr. M'Cara's miniſtry, in the year 1753.

IT having now pleaſed the Lord to deliver me from y long diſtreſs, my great enquiry was, to know what e might mean by this lingering affliction. And ſo eat was the condeſcendency of God to me, at this me, that he bore in upon my mind theſe three ſcripres: *This is the will of God, even your ſanctification*, Theſſ. iv. 3.—*I ſhall not die, but live and declare the orks of the Lord*, Pſal. cxviii. 17.—*Bind up the teſtiony, ſeal the law among my diſciples*, Iſa. viii. 16.—ut my heart diſcontentedly roſe againſt them; and en I found nothing but confuſion.

Though the Lord had now delivered me from my ng afflictions, yet I reckoned that but a ſmall mercy. with what contempt did I look upon the world and mes things?—The Lord again hid his face; and the ody of ſin and death got a grip of me: immediately ſtorm of trying providences comes, and ſeems to conradict the promiſes; ſo that I was tempted to call all he promiſes deluſions: I could not know the real lanuage of the diſpenſations. The time of the ſacrament eing to be diſpenſed drew near, which bred many oubts in my mind; for I knew not what to do.

On the Sabbath that Mr. John M'Cara intimated the acrament, he ſaid, "That it was a cuſtom, in old times, o releaſe a priſoner at the feaſt; and he moreover added, who knows but the Lord may releaſe ſome notable riſoner at this feaſt? If ſo, then ye ſhall have a ſong n the night, when the holy ſolemnity is kept, and

gladneſs of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Iſrael."—This was good news to me indeed; for it was night with my ſoul.

On the Saturday night, Mr. M'Cara ſpoke on theſe words, *Prove me now herewith, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a bleſſing, that there ſhall not be room enough to receive it*, Mal. iii. 10. O the ſweet intercourſe I got with the Lord this night!——When I was going out to the fields for ſecret prayer, theſe words came with power, Song vii. 11, 12. *Come my Beloved, let us go forth into the fields; let us lodge in the villages: Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us ſee if the vine flouriſhes; whether the tender grape appears, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.* O how ſweet and refreſhful were theſe words to me! O this was a ſweet night to me indeed, where I enjoyed communion and fellowſhip with the Lord! O the love and joy I was filled with! O that I may never forget the communion I had in this place. I may call this place *Ebenezer*, or *Bethel*, where I met with God. O but it was a comfortable night to me; a night wherein my intereſt in Chriſt was made as viſible to me, as it had been written in golden letters before mine eyes. It is impoſſible for the tongue of men or angels to declare the joy and comfort I experienced.—O that I could bleſs the Lord for his loving kindneſs to me.

About two or three days after this communion, when I was about my ordinary employment, I got leave to view the Spirit of God in every ſtep of my converſion; when, with wonder, viewing this work of redemption, ſo glorioufly diſplayed, I went out to bleſs and praiſe the Lord who had made me to rejoice in his ſalvation: but, when I was at prayer, the roaring lion did attack me ſuddenly; and with one of his fiery darts, he wounded me. *My proſperous ſtate was quickly turned into miſery.* The enemy ſuggeſted to me, that I was

nothing but a hypocrite, for ye only love God for his benefits, not for holineſs; which hypocrites do. To which I ſaid, that is a truth, for I know not what it is to love God for his holineſs. O how vexing was this to me? I went out rejoicing; but I came in again full of ſorrow. O the ſudden change I experienced! for a little before, I thought I was as it had been at the ſuburbs of heaven; but now brought down to the borders of hell: for, ſince the firſt day that glorious Chriſt revealed himſelf to me, I could never live out of the ſight of my intereſt in him, but in great extremity.

Thus perplexed, I began to examine what length I had come in the way of God; or whether a hypocrite might not attain to all I had, and yet come ſhort of ſaving grace. I prayed; and ſo did the proud Phariſee. I converſe with the godly; and ſo did the fooliſh virgins. I communicate; and ſo did theſe hypocrites. I have a delight in ſeeking the Lord; and ſo had theſe, Iſa. lviii. 2. I am free of groſs out-breakings; and ſo was the young man, Mark x. 20.—Now, what am I more than theſe? They can never love God for his holineſs; but they may love God for his benefits. This induced me to ſend many a petition to the throne of grace. But I ſaid, O this is a depth I will never win out of again: but that word ſtill haunted my mind, *For my thoughts are not as your thoughts.* O how ſhall I teſtify the goodneſs of God, who is always a friend in time of need to poor faithleſs, undeſerving, and ungrateful me?

The Sabbath morning, Mr. M'Cara prefaced on Pſalm cxvi. 2. *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and ſorrow.* And I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord, he was helped to ſpeak as pointedly to my caſe, as if he had known all my thoughts.—This day he was God's meſſenger to me, as many a time he had been, where I have found breathings of the Spirit of God on my ſoul. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: who redeemeth thy*

life from deſtruction: Bleſs him all ye hoſts of heaven. And as the Lord ſhall help me, I ſhall record what of his kindneſs I met with at this ſacrament.—O that I could ſo do it as to make every one that heareth of it fall in love with the lovely and ſweet Jeſus.

I was then under the miniſtry of Mr. M'Cara, in the year 1753. I deſire to remark, to the glory of God, if I could really do it, this being a time of ſpecial manifeſtations, after a dark night of deſertion. I may well remember this day with wonder and admiration at the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus. In the morning, when I was at ſecret prayer, I got near acceſs to the throne of grace, where I got my heart poured out before the Lord, with a great deal of ſweetneſs and compoſure of ſpirit attending it.—At this time there was a burden laid on my ſpirit for the Church: I was afraid that the Lord was about to depart from us; but this morning I got leave to plead with him for the Church, as a man doth with a reconciled friend; and he filled my mouth with arguments. And I deſired to be humbled for my own ſins, and for the ſins of the congregation whereof I was a member; and for the ſins of the land which hath provoked the Lord to depart from us. Being thus concerned, O how ſweetly was theſe words brought in on my mind, *Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.* O this made me wonder at his love; for he drew aſide the vail, and made me ſee into the ſecret of his covenant, whereof I can neither ſpeak nor write to any purpoſe.

But when I was coming to the ordinances, the great adverſary of God and man aſſaulted me with his fiery darts, in order to keep me back from paying in the tribute of praiſe which was due by me, to my great deliverer, who had looſed my bands. The enemy ſuggeſted to me, that my enjoyments were but the joys which temporary believers or hypocrites may have ſometimes in the word. But I think, *joy in the Holy*

Ghoſt hath an enlarging, humbling, and ſanctifying influence upon the ſoul, whereas the joy of hypocrites hath no ſuch effects.

When I was at the table of the Lord, O how ſweet were theſe words to me, Iſa. xliii. 4. *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable; and I have loved thee.*—O what ground of rejoicing was this to my ſoul, to have a God in Chriſt for its reconciled portion.

On the Monday morning, as I was going to the ordinances, my Lord was departed from me, which perplexed me much. I thought, O I have left him at a communion table, not to ſee him again! There was a room in my ſoul the whole world could not fill up, without glorious Chriſt himſelf: there was a moſt vehement flame of love in my ſoul for him, which many waters could not quench. Oh! I could not think of wanting my Lord; I ſay, I could not think of wanting my Lord again.

Public worſhip began; and then Mr. Telfer preached on Iſa. xxvi. 9. *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night; and with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early.* In the time of this preaching I got a glorious diſcovery of my Lord again, with theſe words, *It is expedient for you that I go away.* Now, I can neither expreſs the joy nor the ſorrow I had on my ſpirit. I got liberty to converſe with him as with a loving friend; or as a wife with a loving huſband. But, O this filled my heart with ſorrow to think of parting with my Lord again. I would rather have died on the Mount, and the valley of viſion been my burial place, than come away without Chriſt.

Mr. Fiſher cloſed the work on theſe words, *Follow the Lamb whatſoever he goeth.* He held out Chriſt to be the believer's leader; and ſaid, "If we had a leader in a ſtrange way, we would readily aſk this and that mark about the way at our leader; and would have converſe with our leader." O how confirming was this

to me! yet I came away with a ſorrowful heart from the ordinances, becauſe my Lord told me, that *it was expedient for me that he ſhould go away*, and my ſpiritual enemies were to meet with me again. I cannot but ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord, the laſt day of the feaſt was the greateſt day of it. I never before experienced the like on the laſt day of a ſolemnity. This was a time of feaſting indeed! I may well call the place, a *Bochim*, a place of weeping; or, a *Bethel*, a place where I ſaw the Lord.

How reprovable then are theſe miniſters at this day, who are for putting away all the preachings about ſacramental occaſions, but the faſt-day and the Sabbath-days preachings, when the Lord has been pleaſed to give ſo much of his countenance on theſe days? They are depriving poor ſouls of a feaſt on theſe occaſions, if it lay in their power to hinder it. They ſay upon the matter, *Behold what a wearineſs is it to ſerve God? and they have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

It is to be lamented, that the judicatories of this church are many ways overthrowing theſe foundations, both as to doctrine and government. Who would have thought that it would have been diſputed in Scotland, that Chriſt, the king of Sion, hath a fixt government in his viſible church? How will ye exhonour yourſelves at the hand of God and of Chriſt, who lay no other burden upon you then this, *Hold faſt till I come.*—— Poor covenant-breaking Scotland never thinks upon this.

In the year 1754. I attended at the diſpenſation of the ſacrament in Glaſgow. On Saturday, I heard Mr. Horn preach on theſe words, Mark iv. 11. *And he ſaid unto them, Unto you it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdom of God.* In the time of this diſcourſe I got leave to feed ſweetly; and I had a great deſire to hear him again on that text, which I did upon the Sabbath-day: but found no ſweetneſs in it: whereupon I might

ve ſeen my ſins written upon my judgments, for my miting the Lord to that text.

After Mr. Horn had finiſhed his diſcourſe, Mr. 'Cara preached on theſe words, *Our converſation is heaven.* He ſpoke of many profeſſors who had a rofeſſion of religion, and yet had not their converſa- on in heaven. He ſaid, that many would come that r in a profeſſion of religion, and not have their con- erſation in heaven; as thoſe we read of in Iſa. lviii. 2. *et they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordi- ances of their God: they aſk of me the ordinances of ju- ice; they take delight in approaching to God.* Theſe arks that he ſpoke of filled my ſoul with perplexity; or the cloud was ſo dark that was upon my ſoul, that could not ſee to read my evidences, or a title to his avour: and I was afraid that all I ever met with was deluſion.

By this time, the communicating work of the day vas almoſt over, and I knew not what to do; for I vas afraid that I would betray glorious Chriſt if I went orward to his table. I ſtood perplexed, till Mr. M'Cara roſe to ſerve the laſt table. Then theſe words were born in upon my mind, *Why halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; or if your dols be God, then embrace them.* I could ſtay no longer, but went to the table. Mr. M'Cara gave ſome marks of a ſaving faith, at which I was ſore ſhaken; for the cloud ſtill remained on my ſoul: but a little after that, t pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, that I got ſuch ſight as I deſire never to forget it again: I ſaw his heart's love to me from all eternity. O for an heart enlarged as the ſand upon the ſea-ſhore to love him: I can never truſt precious Chriſt too much, and myſelf oo little; for I had no thought of ſuch an enjoyment of glorious Chriſt. O that love of his! When I think on his love, and the enmity of my own heart, O how humbling a ſight is it!

Now, when at the table, I got leave to behold his love ſhining in a cup of red wine. O that I could praiſe him for his love! Although I had the tongues of men and angels I could not expreſs his love. I think faith's views of the love of God, and a ſight of the enmity of our own hearts, is a very humbling ſight.——O that I could praiſe him for his love: O, he is altogether love. Love him, O my ſoul.

Mr. James Erſkine cloſed the work. In the time of his preaching I got leave to feaſt ſweetly on the fruit of the bleſſed apple-tree. The Lord hath been pleaſed to pain me with his love; and my pain groweth through want of real poſſeſſion.——O wonderful love to ſo unworthy, ſo ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I am!

PERIOD FIFTH.

This period preſents us with ſeveral inſtances of the deep diſtreſs of mind ſhe was brought into, on the Lord's withdrawing himſelf from her, and Satan's tempting her even to take away her natural life: with the agreeable relief ſhe found on the Lord's return, and how beneficial Mr. Cock's miniſtrations were to her for this purpoſe.

SOME time after this agreeable diſplay of the Lord's goodneſs to my poor ſoul, I found, on my return home, the clouds ariſing again, which covered the whole heavens, as it were, and hid from me the refreſhing and lightſome rays of the Sun of Righteouſneſs: My heart-plagues alſo prevailed; and, which was moſt diſtreſſing, the Lord continued to hide his face from me.

Such was the Lord's kindneſs, however, to me, that I ſtill enjoyed the means of grace: And on the Sabbath day, Mr. Cock preached upon theſe words,

Pet. v. 6. *Humble yourſelves under the mighty hand of God.* He ſpoke of the ſins that provoked the Lord to lift up his hand; and alſo of the ſins of not being humbled when God's hand is lifted up.——Then I thought I had not been humbled aright for the enmity of my heart; and I was afraid that ſuch ſins and grace could not dwell together.—On this the adverſary ſuggeſted to me, "That although I was exalted, like Capernaum, to heaven, yet I ſhould be brought down to hell." I owned that was true, I have been exalted, and little matter of that, although I ſhould be brought down to hell, if I were kept from ſinning here.

When I was thus ſore grieved, theſe words came into my mind, Ruth i. 16. *Where thou goeſt, I will go.* At which I thought, although the Lord ſhould caſt me down to hell, he would be there: he is there by his power; his juſtice is there.

I went ſtill on in my unbelieving thoughts of God, till theſe words came into my mind with power, *Seeing they crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open ſhame*, Heb. vi. 6. with 2 Sam. xvi. 17. *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend?* O Sirs, he hath ſhamed me with his kindneſs. O this pierced my very heart, to think of my having pierced glorious Chriſt, for which I might go mourning to my grave.——O wonderful love, that ever the Lord vouchſafed friendſhip to ſuch a rebellious creature as I am! It is a wonder of mercy that he did not caſt me down to hell: But full of pity he forgave my ſins, and did not ſlay me.—Then, O how did it grieve my heart, when I thought on my ungratefulneſs to ſo kind a Lord! I viewed myſelf as one that had, with a ſword, pierced the heart of a dear friend: and, indeed, Chriſt is the beſt Friend. This made me to go mourning when I thought on my dear Lord, how I had wounded him in the houſe of his friends.

As I was coming from the ordinances, a godly woman that I was acquainted with, aſked me, How I was, with a ſmiling face. To whom I ſaid, "O if ye ſaw "my heart, as God ſeeth it, ye would never ſmile up- "on the like of me." However, my trouble was ſo great, that I was obliged to take my bed, being grieved at the melancholy thoughts of crucifying the Son of God afreſh by unbelief, and putting him to an open ſhame.—I imagined I had deceived myſelf; and I was afraid that all I had ever met with was a deluſion of Satan: and my Bible became to me as a ſealed book.

On the Sabbath day Mr. Cock preached on Pſalm lvii. 1. *Be merciful to me, O God; for my ſoul truſteth in thee.* One note he had was to this purpoſe, "That "although the wicked ſhould lie in hell to all eternity, "they could never pay the whole debt owing to the "juſtice of God: but Chriſt, the glorious ſurety, was "bound to pay the whole debts owing by an elect "world, in virtue of the covenant of works; yea, *He* "*magnified the law and made it honourable*, by his obe- "dience: and thus he recovered a title to eternal life." When Mr. Cock was ſpeaking on this note, I ſaw a bright diſplay of redeeming love, with power, ſhine in upon my ſoul; and alſo a bright diſplay of the ſufferings of glorious Chriſt in my room. I got leave to behold that the angel of the Lord did wondrouſly in the work of purchaſing our redemption.

In the interval of worſhip, I went to prayer: one of my requeſts was, that the Lord would come out with his ſervant, and manifeſt his glory amongſt us. And theſe words were borne in on my mind with power, Prov. viii. 20. *I lead in the way of righteouſneſs, in the midſt of the paths of judgment.* There was a wreſtling ſpirit given me to plead with the Lord; and he filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me to plead with him as a man doth with a reconciled friend. O that I could love him.—When I came into the meeting houſe, they ſung in Pſalm cxvi. from the beginning

I love the Lord, becauſe my voice
And prayers he did hear.
I, while I live, will call on him,
Who bow'd to me his ear.

On which I invited the whole congregation to join with me in loving and praiſing him for his love.—Again, the glorious hearer of prayer condeſcended to draw aſide the vail, that I might get a ſight I would never forget again. O that exceeding great glory that I ſaw by faith, in the perſon of the Son of God! O it is an unſpeakable glory; I can neither ſpeak nor write about it: it filled my ſoul with wondering at his love; and that glory ſo filled my ſoul, that I thought I could behold no more of it in this clay tabernacle, which made me cry, *O when will the day break, and the ſhadows flee away*, that I might win to behold his glory, without interpoſition, within the vail, where no ſhadows would ever intercept the glorious rays of his bleſſed face again.—And this diſplay of his glory had an abiding impreſſion on my ſoul for that whole week.

On the next Sabbath morning, however, when I awaked out of my ſleep, my ſpiritual enemies within my heart raged ſo, that I was made to cry out, *O wretched* woman *that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Mr. Cock preached on the ſame text he was on the day before: but, O how taſteleſs was it to me, for as ſweet as it was to me the day before? But now, *My Beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone.*

Between the forenoon and afternoon's ſermon, I went to the place where I ſaw his glory the day before, in order to pray; but I could not open my mouth: the thoughts of God's being angry with me terrified me: *I found grief and trouble.* His terrible majeſty made me afraid.—I ſat down aſtoniſhed. Then the enemy, who is ever watchful for his opportunity, did ſorely aſſault with that temptation, to take away my own life: and the temptation was covered over with

that maſk that it would put an end to indwelling ſins, which I ſo much wanted; and this was ſomething agreeable to me: for I could be ſatisfied to have indwelling ſins put to an end, becauſe they are ſo diſhonouring to God, and hurtful to my own ſoul. And the enemy ſuggeſted to me the ſuitableneſs of the place, it being a very ſolitary one at a water-ſide where none would ſee me.—O that I could bleſs the Lord for his faithfulneſs, who *never ſuffered me to be tempted above that he made me able to bear; but with the temptation, made a way of eſcape.* Then theſe words came into my mind with power, *He that ſhall endure unto the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved*, Mark xiii. 13.; at which the tempter fled from me for a ſeaſon. Glory be to God, who hath delivered me from the *ſubtile fowler's ſnare*; for in that *he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.*

O what need of watchfulneſs after enjoyments. I think the devil never aſſaults a Chriſtian more violently, than immediately after his enjoyments: then *the blaſt of the terrible one is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.*—At ſuch times ordinarily a Chriſtian loſes the grace of fear. After we are in part brought near the King, we ſhould beware of ſinging the triumph before the victory. When we are brought even within ſight of Chriſt, then we are ready to cry out, *My mountain ſtandeth ſtrong, I ſhall never be moved.* I ſuppoſe, theſe enjoyments of Chriſt, that are attended with much ſpiritual fightings, are uſually the longeſt, the ſweeteſt, and moſt advantageous.

On the twenty-firſt day of February, 1755. Mr. Cock preached on Pſalm lxxxiv. 7. *They go from ſtrength to ſtrength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* This day it pleaſed the Lord to give a gracious diſplay of himſelf to me. One day this week, as I was helped to a very ſweet meditation on the love of Chriſt, he graciouſly manifeſted himſelf to me: I got him in the arms of my faith, on the back of this ſingular diſplay

of himſelf and his love. It was however but of a ſhort continuance.

Soon after this I was again violently aſſaulted by the tempter to take away my own life: he preſented to me a knife therewith to do it; no perſon being in the houſe but myſelf. The enemy purſued me ſo cloſs, that I could not endure ſo much as to ſee the knife in my ſight, but laid it away. I complied ſo far; but the power of God kept me from the power of Satan. I was ſo taken with the temptation, that I did not value my own life, but the glory of God.

One night when I was diſcourſing with a godly woman, I told her I was ſorely purſued by the enemy. She ſaid, ye have need to watch: and moreover ſhe told me of a woman, that was thought to be a godly perſon, and yet ſhe was left to take away her own life. —O what ſorrow did this fill my heart with, for I thought that would be my caſe! *Horror took hold of me: I found grief and trouble.*

I roſe to go to our own houſe again; but, ſuch a trembling ſeized me, and a fear of being left to diſhonour God, that I knew not what to do. My grief was ſo very great, that I could ſcarce walk upon the ſtreets. And as I was coming home, I was violently aſſaulted by the enemy to go into the ſea, and drown myſelf: but I ſaid, That it would dreadfully diſhonour God, and grieve the ſpirits of the Lord's people.—The enemy replied, That I would do it one time or other. At which I ſaid, Woe is me that ever I made a profeſſion of religion, if I be left to wound it.—The enemy again ſuggeſted, The longer ye continue your profeſſion, you will wound religion the more.

When I came to my houſe, I reaſoned with myſelf how I ſhould enter it, leſt the enemy get power over me? But juſt as I was coming in to it, theſe words were borne in on my mind, Pſalm cxxi. 8. *The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for evermore.* Then the echo of my

ſoul was, *Stabliſh thy word unto thy ſervant, who is devoted to thy fear*, Pſalm cxix. 38.—I came into my houſe, and ſhut the door; and I earneſtly begged of God, that he would either rebuke Satan, or uphold me under his temptations. The Lord then ſeaſonably brought to my mind the temptations of our bleſſed Lord, wherewith the devil tempted him to deny his Sonſhip, and to devil worſhip: *And the devil ſaid unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this ſtone that it be made bread*, &c. Luke iv. 3.; for, *If theſe things were done in the green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry?* By this I ſaw, that the dear Son of God's love was not exempted from temptation. And theſe words much haunted my mind, in Heb. xii. 3. *Conſider him who endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* But, alas! I wanted faith to take the *ſhield of faith*, wherewith I ſhould be *able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil:* and to take the *helmet of ſalvation*, and the *ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

About this time there was great noice of the French armies coming into our land; and great preſs for men: all which made me ſore afraid. When I thought upon our great and grievous backſlidings and apoſtacies from God, and from a pure covenanted work of reformation, and our many abominable practices; no nation in the world hath ſo far changed their glory for that which is their ſhame, as we have done, having broken our ſacred vows and covenants, burnt and buried them in oblivion, and ſhed the blood of the ſaints for their faithfulneſs in adhering to them: When I thought on all this, I was ſore afraid that the Lord might come out of his place to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities; and even ſend in a bloody ſword to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant.—By this the enemy got great advantage over me: for he violently aſſaulted me with his fiery darts, and ſuggeſted to me, that it was better to fall by my own hand, than by the

hands of the uncircumciſed Philiſtines, leſt they come and thruſt me through and abuſe me.—To which I replied, Little matter of that, were I kept from ſin, and from diſhonouring of God.

One night as I was in my melancholy caſe, it pleaſed the merciful God to ſend in theſe words upon my mind with power, Dan. vi. 20. *O Daniel, ſervant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou ſerveſt continually able to deliver thee?* This might have ſhamed me out of unbelief. The apoſtle, in Eph. vi. 16. calls faith the *ſoul's ſhield* againſt temptation: and it is called *the victory by which we overcome the world*, 1 John v. 4.; the *ſword*, or *weapon*, by which we atchieve our victories. And if ſo, then unbelief, curſed unbelief, diſarms us of both *ſword* and *ſhield*, and leaves us naked of defence in the day of battle. At this time theſe words, Pſalm lxxiii. 24. were powerfully brought in on my mind,

Thou, with thy counſel, while I live,
Wilt me conduct and guide;
And to thy glory afterward,
Receive me to abide.

Theſe words brought a time freſh to my mind wherein I acted very ſinfully, while I attended on the ſacrament at Glaſgow, diſpenſed by Mr. Fiſher. I came from hearing ſermon at the tent, into the church, with a deſign of going to the table of the Lord; but when I came in to the church, I got a ſeat, and ſat down, and I thought I would ſit till the laſt table: But, by this conduct, I ſo provoked the Lord with my ſin, that he let looſe the enemy, in his righteous judgment, to fill my heart with blaſphemous thoughts of God, which I forbear to ſpeak of here. Let none prefer ſeats, or any external conveniency, to the work of the Lord, on ſuch ſolemn occaſions.—I roſe however and came to the table of the Lord; but with a worſe frame than when I ſat down: The Lord, however, was very merciful to me; and was pleaſed glorioufly to manifeſt

himſelf to me, in the breaking of bread.—O wonderful love of God, that he ſhould love ſuch an unlovely wretch as I am; who, a little before, had my heart filled with enmity againſt him. Now I was made to look upon him whom I had pierced, and was made to mourn; and I was ſore afraid that I would diſhonour him again: But when I was thus grieved for my ſin, and afraid leſt I ſhould offend him more, thoſe words were again borne in on my mind with power, Pſalm lxxiii. 4. *Thou wilt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* I found ſuch a ſweetneſs in theſe words that I was made to cry in my heart, O the plaiſter is as broad as the ſore. I ſaw ſuch a fulneſs in theſe refreſhing words, they being both an ample ſecurity for time and eternity, that I was made to feaſt deliciouſly upon them: and many a time ſince they have been very ſavoury to me; and even now, in the time of this ſore combat with the enemy, they have been very refreſhing to me alſo.

This ſore conflict with the enemy laſted about two weeks: then it pleaſed the merciful God to rebuke the tempter. And about that time, for the ſpace of other two weeks, a great deadneſs ſeized me; and I had no liberty in prayer. When I went to my devotion I was often ſo ſeized with ſleep that I could ſcarce open my mouth in prayer to God.—This made me to think upon my former ways; and I ſaw that I had juſtly provoked the Lord to depart from me, by the ſin of unbelief: For, although the Lord ſaid in his word, *Henceforth thy goings out and in, God keep for ever will*, yet I did not believe his word. I really thought I would fall a prey to the enemy one day or other.

The firſt Sabbath I could not go to the ordinances, although they were the very joy of my heart, my trouble was ſo exceeding great.—The next Sabbath I heard, but could not apply. Mr. Cock then preached upon Pſal. lxxxiv. 7. *They go from ſtrength to ſtrength, till they appear before God in Zion.* One note he had

was, "That he knew not a ſin but a believer might be tempted to commit it."—This note was a little ſweet to me; for I thought, if I had not been a believer in Chriſt, I would not have been ſo much tempted by the devil.—But ſtill *the comforter that ſhould relieve my ſoul was far from me.*

The next Sabbath-day Mr. Cock was on the cloſe of his diſcourſes on the foreſaid text. In the application he ſaid, "Becauſe of the ſins of believers, eſtrangement took place between the Lord and their ſouls; and they become like ſtrangers to one another."—At which my ſoul cryed, "O Lord, ſend on the body what thou wilt, but take not away the light of thy countenance from my ſoul." And it grieved me ſore that I had ſinned away the Lord from my ſoul. I thought that I was like Adam in the firſt temptation; for he believed the devil more than God; and ſo did I: inſtead of honouring God, by believing in him, I diſhonoured him by unbelief.—And this brought to my mind a note of Mr. M'Cara's; when he was ſpeaking of the ſins that provoked the Lord to withdraw the light of his countenance, he ſaid, "Becauſe they ſided ſo much with the houſe of Saul againſt the houſe of David, and did bear falſe witneſs againſt the Spirit of the Lord, in their own ſouls; for which the Lord was provoked to let them go long mourning without the ſun."—When I reflected on this, O how did it pierce my very heart, to think how often I had ſinned againſt the Lord?

When I was thus ſore pained, all on a ſudden, a bright diſplay of redeeming love did, with power, ſhine in upon my ſoul, that I was filled with wonder, at the amazing good-will of God to ſuch a rebellious, unworthy, ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I was.—I came home wondering at his love; and my mouth was filled with praiſe, and my ſoul with joy. I thought I never could praiſe God enough: whereupon I reſolved to ſacrifice to him the ſacrifice of thankſgiving, for

my great deliverances. For this purpoſe, I went to a ſecret place, where I was often wont to go for prayer: but, at this time, Satan had almoſt affrighted me from it. So ſtrong, however, were the impreſſions of divine love, that I thought, tho' there had been a hell of devils there, I would not have been very much afraid of them; for I ſaw the Lord to be more of might by far than whole legions of them.

At this time it pleaſed the Lord to double the viſion, and glorioufly to manifeſt himſelf to me again. O the exceeding greatneſs of that glory that ſo filled my ſoul, that I could do no more but wonder at it for a little time!—I again invited all things in heaven, and all things on the earth, to join with me in my melodious ſong of praiſe to God for his love. O the fulneſs that I now ſaw in glorious Chriſt to ſupply all my wants!—Yea, I thought if it had been but poſſible for me to have ſuffered ten deaths, rather than to have glorious Chriſt's face clouded again from me, I would have chearfully ſubmitted thereto: but, Ah! it grieved me ſore, that I could love him ſo little. *He is altogether lovely.*—This Sabbath was March 17th, 1755.

The next ſubject Mr. Cock preached upon was Rev. iii. 1. *I know thy works, that thou haſt a name, that thou liveſt, and art dead.* The doctrine that he obſerved was to this purpoſe, "That there is a generation "of men and women, who have a name that they "live, and yet are amongſt the congregation of the "dead." Among other things, he ſaid, "Ye will think it a hard thing for me to ſay to you that ye have a name to live, and yet want the thing ſignified by it: the name is BLASPHEMY; *I know the blaſphemy of them which ſay they are Jews, and are not,* Rev. ii. 9.

This laſt week of April, 1755. was the moſt remarkable for ſignal manifeſtations of his glory I ever before beheld: from Sabbath to Sabbath I had a heaven upon earth; I never experienced the like of it. *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his*

fruit was ſweet to my taſte.—One morning, when I awaked out of ſleep, *My Beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone:* whereupon I, like as the hart for the water brooks ſo panted my ſoul after more and more communion with God. Upon which thoſe words were borne in on my mind with power, John xvii. 24. *I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.* There was ſuch a glory ſhined forth brightly in theſe words, that it filled my ſoul with wonder. Now I ſaw my will that was once wholly rebellion againſt God, and glorious Chriſt's will, ſweetly complying together; for he has ſaid, *I will that they may behold my glory:* and my ſoul ſayeth, So be it, O Lord. And theſe words in Luke i. 28. *Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee:* and Jeremiah xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love.*——O Sirs, this is the cauſe of all, *his love.*

On the 27th of April, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Rev. iii. 1. *I know thy works, that thou haſt a name that thou liveſt and art dead.* When he read out the text I looked up to God, and earneſtly begged, that he would let us ſee what our name is, whether it be amongſt the living, or amongſt the dead; whereupon I thought the glorious hearer of prayer ſeemed to ſay unto me, *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*——Between the intervals of public worſhip, I had a deſire to go alone to praiſe him for his love: tho' I cannot praiſe him aright. I went to a ſolitary place for prayer: and there was ſuch a concern laid on my ſpirit for the church, I almoſt forgot myſelf. There I was made to weep before the Lord, for our great and grievous defections, and apoſtacies from God, and from a pure convenanted work of reformation; for which I fear the Lord is pleading a quarrel with the inhabitants of the land.—When I was weeping for thoſe ſins, theſe words were borne in on my mind with great power, Iſa. lxii. 4. *Thou ſhalt no more be termed,* FORSAKEN; *neither ſhall*

thy land be any more termed, DESOLATE: *but thou ſhalt be called* HEPHZI-BAH, *and thy land* BEULAH: *for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land ſhall be married;* together with thoſe words in Hoſea ii. 16. *And it ſhall be at that day, ſaith the Lord, that thou ſhalt call me* ISHI; [that is, my huſband;] *and ſhalt call me no more* BAALI; [that is, my Lord.] O this made me aſhamed, and to bluſh before the Lord, to think of his love to this poor backſliding and covenant-breaking land; for the ſins whereof the Lord ſeemeth to be about to avenge the quarrel of a broken covenant, by a bloody ſword: yet I got leave to lay claim to him as a huſband to the church, and to myſelf alſo. O how ſweetly were theſe words borne in on my mind, Jer. ii. 2. *I remember thee, the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals?* To which I ſaid, My love is not worth the remembering; but, O that I could praiſe thee for thy love: *Not unto me, not unto me, but to thy name be the glory.* — O! the ſight of his bleſſed face, and the ſmell of his precious garments allured and raviſhed my heart. *He brought me to the banquetting-houſe, and his banner over me was love. His mouth is moſt ſweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.* It grieved my ſoul, that I could not love and praiſe him more for his love.

For the moſt part of this week, I got leave to delight in his love. O the many ſweet meditations I got of his love, which made me to cry, O that time would fly away, that I might win to the enjoyment of my Lord within the vail, where no mountains of Bether would hide me from the light of his glorious countenance again. —— Thoſe words haunted my mind very much, Gen. xxxiv. 1. *Remember Dinah, Jacob's daughter, how ſhe went out to ſee the daughters of the land.* — I took theſe words to be a caution to beware of giving my heart to any other lovers than glorious Chriſt to raviſh it, by giving them the throne in my heart, and ſo provoke him to with-hold the light of his counte-

nance from me. For the moſt part of this week I got leave to dwell upon his love.—One thing I muſt remark; and, O that I could do it to the praiſe of the Lord, thoſe glorious manifeſtations which I got of himſelf, greatly mortified indwelling ſin, and filled my ſoul with joy and peace in believing.

The next Sabbath Mr. Cock prefaced on Pſal. xxvii. 6. *And now ſhall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle ſacrifices of joy: I will ſing, yea, I will ſing praiſes unto the Lord.* I was very deſirous to hear him upon theſe words, becauſe about a year before, when I was in trouble, theſe words were borne in upon my mind. This was a time of great deadneſs which made me to cry, *O wretched woman that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* But theſe words gave me ſome hope in my bondage, and ſome ſmall expectation of ſome victory over my ſpiritual enemies.

But my trouble did increaſe, and the thoughts of death affrighted me: *I found grief and trouble.* By this time I had loſt ſight of the promiſe, and of the glorious manifeſtations of God's love; this made death very frightful to me: but when I was brought to great diſtreſs, it pleaſed the Lord ſeaſonably to ſend in theſe words with power upon my mind, Iſa. xliii. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters I will be with thee.* Theſe words had ſuch a power in them as made me to ſay, O! *It is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief.*——By this time I could look death broad in the face. Now I thought theſe words in Pſalm xxvii. 6. were accompliſhed, *Mine head ſhall be lifted up above all thoſe that are my foes.* I got a ſight of victory, through glorious Chriſt, over all mine enemies; and theſe words were ſweetly made out to me. And when Mr. Cock prefaced on theſe words, he applyed them ſo cloſe to my caſe, that they were very comforting to me, and confirmed me in my former ex-

periences. O this was a day of the gladneſs of my heart: for, when he came to the application of the doctrine, he gave ſome marks of them whom *the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* Theſe words having been very ſweet to me in former times, the Spirit of God, witneſſing with my Spirit, I came to reflect comfortably upon by-paſt experiences of his love to my ſoul; and, by the immediate ſhining of the holy Spirit upon his own graces implanted in my ſoul. O with what joy, peace, and believing was my ſoul filled with!— But I was grieved to ſee ſo few putting honour upon glorious Chriſt, by believing on him. Glory, glory be to God for the diſpenſation of the goſpel, diſcovering life and ſalvation through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

On the 18th of May, 1755. Mr. Cock preached on Pſalm lxxxvii. 7. *All my ſprings are in thee.* O glorious day of the goſpel! And glory be to God I got leave to apply the love of Chriſt, and the promiſe ſealed with the blood of Chriſt. Why does ſin prevail ſo much, but becauſe we believe the love of Chriſt ſo little.—— O for more faith and more love in him, who is *altogether lovely.*

After this glorious diſplay of God's love, the enemy violently ſuggeſted to me, That the Lord would bring forth all my writings, at the day of judgment, as ſo many witneſſes againſt me. At which I was a little ſhaken; yet I had no inclination to diſhonour God by unbelief. Theſe words came in to my mind, That Satan is *a liar from the beginning, and the father of liars.* O that I could bleſs the Lord for it, who did not withhold the witneſs of his Spirit to bear witneſs with my ſpirit to the truth of what I had written: and I got leave to delight myſelf in his love again for ſome time. And when my conſcience accuſed me for any ſin, I got liberty to apply the blood of Chriſt afreſh for juſtification and ſanctification.

Some time after this, the enemy gave me a new on-

ſet; and told me, I was a great fool to make application to Chriſt's blood, for I could have no benefit by it, ſeeing I had profaned it, by often coming to it with my ſins: and therefore the Lord would reject my confidence in the blood of Chriſt. Alas! this filled my ſoul with grief and trouble: I thought I could be content to die a beggar at mercy's door, if I might win in: but I thought my hope of mercy was gone for ever, if the Lord had rejected my hope in and thro' the meritorious virtue of the blood of the *Lamb ſlain, before the foundation of the world.*

By this time my diſtreſs was ſo great, that I was afraid I would be deprived of the exerciſe of my reaſon, and my religion come to be ridiculed by the profane world: *The arrows of the Almighty did drink up my ſpirits night and day.* Whilſt I was thus in the fearful pit, and ſinking in the miry clay, theſe words came into my mind, and *I will give thee the morning ſtar, to find out the depths of Satan's arrows.* I took my Bible to ſee the words; but when I found them, they did not read that way, and this grieved me alſo; for I thought the words came from Satan: and I was ſore grieved at the melancholy thoughts of having deceived myſelf ſo long. The enemy did again violently aſſault me to curſe God for his way of dealing with me. But this I rejected with abhorrence, and ſaid, No, no. Shall I employ my tongue in curſing of God, when, not many days ago, I could not get him praiſed enough, who is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe, and on which I invited the whole creation to join with me in my melodious ſong of praiſe? No, no: I would rather want my tongue than to have it employed in curſing of God. Then thoſe words came into my mind, *The Lord is mighty to ſave to the uttermoſt:* with Zech. iii. 1. *And he ſhewed me Joſhua the high-prieſt ſtanding before the angel of the Lord, and Satan ſtanding at his right-hand to reſiſt him.* This being the Sabbath morning, I had a deſire to go to the ordinances; but by reaſon

of the great grief of my ſoul, my body was as it had been in a fever. However, I thought it poſſible I might get ſome comfort at the ordinances, and accordingly I went; but when I was come, the enemy aſſured me, that the miniſter would not get leave to ſpeak a word of comfort to ſuch a helliſh brat as I was, who had ſo often profaned the blood of Chriſt. During the time of ſermon, the enemy ſorely oppreſſed me; but he who giveth *power to the faint*, and *increaſeth ſtrength to them that have no might*, ſupported me: when the miniſter was praying; I ſay, when he was praying, he prayed ſo much for the tempted, that the Lord might be with them, when they paſſed through the waters of affliction, and fiery trials of temptation, that ſhould try them, as though *ſome ſtrange thing happened unto them*, 1 Pet. iv. 12. There came ſuch a divine power along with thoſe words, as made me to ſay, O the infinite wiſdom of God; it hath out-witted me and Satan both. Now I knew that it was the Lord that gave direction to his ſervant to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to me, for he knew nothing of my diſtreſs. *O that men would give praiſe to the Lord for his goodneſs.* And, O that I could praiſe him who hath *delivered my diſtreſſed ſoul from death.* All this week I got not a ſingle blink of his countenance except one, which was when we were met for ſocial prayer. I got a blink of him who is altogether lovely. It was very ſhort, but extremely ſweet: I got leave, however, to meditate on his word.

The next Sabbath, being the 9th of June, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Pſalm xxii. 31. *They ſhall come, and ſhall declare his righteouſneſs unto a people that ſhall be born, that he hath done this.* The doctrine was to this purpoſe, "That it is the duty of the preſent ge-
"neration to tell what the Lord hath done to the riſ-
"ing one; and it is the duty of the preſent riſing ge-
"neration to mingle faith with hearing-tell what God
"hath done to the former one: and it is the duty of e-

very succeeding generation to tell the following one, what this glorious Doer hath done."—This day was very gladsome day: O that I could give honour to him or his love. This day I got liberty to say, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his: The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, in whom I will trust.* I am persuaded, that while unbelief reigns and rules, the soul speaks in a quite other strain. Unbelief puts away the love of Christ from itself; and Satan gains his point so long as he can tempt to continue in unbelief. But, suppose, that so far as unbelief is broken in its reign and rule, so far does the soul bring home to itself this giving love of Christ. O give me one love-token after another, *till the day break, and the shadows fly away.*

PERIOD SIXTH.

Containing some account of her attending several sacramental solemnities during the summer season; with what was both distressing and joyful to her on these occasions: together with what struggles she had with the enemy, and the relief she experienced on the Lord's seasonably interposing; which concludes the year 1755, *a year remarkable for many fiery temptations, and also of glorious manifestations.*

THE sacrament of the Lord's supper being to be dispensed at Stirling, on the second Sabbath of June, 1755, I resolved to attend. On the Saturday Mr. Patison preached on Luke xxii. 19. *This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.* The head of the doctrine he illustrated was, The *benefits* that believers have in feeding upon Christ's broken body. He said, "My friends, ye have the benefit of having all your outward senses exercised, 1 John i. 1. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have*

looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life." In the time of this excellent diſcourſe, I got leave to feed ſweetly on his perſon, on his love, on his covenant, on his purchaſe, on his righteouſneſs, on his fulneſs, *&c.* Before this ſacrament, theſe words were borne in on my mind, 1 Sam. ix. 13. *Now therefore get you up, for about this time ye ſhall find him:* with theſe words, Gen. xxxv. 1. *Ariſe, go up to Bethel, and dwell there:* with Song vii. 12. *There will I give thee my loves.*—O ſweet ſaying: There was ſuch a bright diſplay of redeeming love ſhone in with power upon my ſoul, with theſe words, as kindled a moſt vehement flame of love to him who is altogether lovely; and filled me with a deſire to ſhew forth the Lord's death, and to embrace the very firſt opportunity to do it. But this Saturday night the Lord hid his face, and my heart-plagues prevailed. This night I had a prodigeous ſtruggle, and battle with Satan, and unbelief, and a wandring heart, that I could not get liberty in prayer as I uſed to have. For ſome time before this I knew little about a wandring heart in the time of duty.

On the Sabbath morning I knew not well what to do, for I could get no liberty in prayer: but, as I was going to the ordinances, I got leave to meditate on Chriſt's love; and when I remembered his by-paſt loving-kindneſs, it conſtrained me to go to the firſt table to ſhew forth the death and dying love of Chriſt. When I ſat down at the table of the Lord, the corruptions of nature prevailed to ſuch a degree that I abhorred myſelf: But then, O how ſweetly were theſe words borne in upon me? Song iv. 1. *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.* O wonderful love that ever he loved ſo vile a creature as I am. O that I could praiſe him for his love, who is altogether lovely.

Mr. Erſkine preached on Eph. v. 2. *And hath given himſelf for us, an offering and a ſacrifice to God, for a*

ſweet-ſmelling ſavour. During the ſermon I got leave to hear with application to myſelf.—Hence ſee the infinite evil of ſin, which nothing could expiate but Chriſt's giving himſelf a ſacrifice for us. We may ſee the greatneſs of the ſore by the greatneſs of the gift. He is the glorious giver.——I was allowed to hear ſweetly: but in the time of receiving, I wanted the aſſurance of ſenſe. This made me to think that I had kept ſome ſins in my heart, for which the Lord with-held the light of his countenance. I was induced to think that I had made little conſcience of examining myſelf; and I thought I had mourned ſo little for ſin, before I came to the Lord's table, that it was no wonder though he with-held the light of his countenance from me.

At the diſmiſſing of the table I went out to the tent, where I heard Mr. Cock on theſe words, Job xxxiv. 32. *That which I ſee not, teach thou me.* He ſpoke ſweetly of the myſteries that Chriſt taught the believer: and I cannot ſay but I got liberty to make application. But, ah! I wanted the ſweet ſenſible enjoyment of him who is altogether lovely. There was a want in my ſoul which the whole world could not make up, without the enjoyment of my Lord. I could not find him there.—Thus perplexed, I came into the meeting-houſe again. Mr. Pattiſon was going to ſerve the table: then it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer, to draw aſide the vail, and to diſcover to me his glory; *He brought me to the banquetting-houſe, and his banner over me was love.* Then I was diſpoſed to ſay, *Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples; for I am ſick of love. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand.*—O that I could love him. O the ſweet armful I got of glorious Chriſt by faith! O that I had never loſt the ſenſe of his love again. I then thought, if I had a thouſand hearts, they ſhould all be employed in loving and praiſing Chriſt for his love. O it pained my very heart that I could not love

him more. Mr. Pattiſon proceeded to ſerve the table; and he ſaid many a time, *What do ye want?* But I thought he ſpoke not a ſingle word to me, who wanted a heart to praiſe him for his love.——I renewed my conſent to the bargain: ſo that I was content to take up the croſs and follow the bleſſed Redeemer in any manner he pleaſed to diſpoſe of me. At this time I had ſuch a ſenſe of the love of Chriſt and his beauty, and of my own vileneſs and loathſomneſs, that I cannot expreſs. This was as remarkable a day of power to me indeed as ever I felt: for I ſaw that it was the Spirit of the Lord, ſpeaking by his ſervants, which brought alongſt with it a power to make me willing.—Now I was like a new come-out traveller in vigour and ſtrength: I leapt over walls and mountains of difficulties. This pleaſant life I enjoyed for a little: but alas! theſe days were but few in number. I ſoon met with a ſore temptation from Satan.

Mr. John M'Cara's ſacrament at Bruntſhields, was diſpenſed fourteen days after Stirling, alſo in the year 1755. Between theſe two ſacraments I had ſome ſore aſſaults from Satan: but I got alſo ſome ſweet meditations of the Lord's loving-kindneſs, in the intervals. Upon Saturday Mr. Cock preached on theſe words, Zech. xiii. 1. *In that day there ſhall be a fountain opened to the houſe of David, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin and for uncleanneſs.* Mr. James Erſkine was much on *the crucifying of Chriſt.* But all the time I could not get a view of glorious Chriſt, and this grieved me much; for I thought I had ſinned him away from my ſoul.—On the Sabbath morning I was ſore troubled becauſe the Lord hid his face; and this led me to take a more cloſs view of my heart-plagues. And I got a diſcovery of the ſin of unbelief; and thought it was the ſin for which the Lord hid his face: eſpecially one day I recollected in the time of Mr. Cock's ſermon, by the violent aſſaults of Satan, and my own unbelieving heart, I could not believe that the Lord

would love the like of me, a black lump of hell; and ſo concluded hell would be my portion for ever. At this time I got ſuch a clear view of my ſin of unbelief, as though I had crucified Chriſt in Crawfurd's-dyke. Oh! this grieved me ſore to think of the wounds I had given to glorious Chriſt. At this time theſe words were borne in on my mind, Heb. vi. 6.—*Seeing they crucify to themſelves the Son of God afreſh.* Ah! I ſinned againſt light. O that abominable ſin of unbelief, which parts between Chriſt and the poor ſoul. Then I thought, O if I had but one blink of his glorious countenance again: but I have ſinned him away from my ſoul.

Mr. M'Cara's action-ſermon was on 1 Pet. iii. 18. *For Chriſt alſo hath once ſuffered for ſins; the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God.* He ſpoke much of the ſufferings of Chriſt; and the whole of it was a remarkable diſcourſe. When he had ſerved the firſt table, he invited the people to come ſpeedily to the ſecond: and to encourage them, he ſaid, "God will "not lay his avenging hand upon you; for he hath "laid it upon Chriſt: he beheld the blood of the co-"venant, and he laid not his hand upon them: *And* "*they ſaw the God of Iſrael, and there was under his* "*feet, as it were, a paved work of ſapphire ſtone, and* "*as it were the body of heaven in his clearneſs:—alſo* "*they ſaw God, and did eat and drink.*" He ſaid to believers, "There is no fear tho' ye be under a cloud, "it is not a cloud of wrath, Exod. xxiv. 10, 11, 18." O the majeſty that I ſaw in theſe words! there was ſuch a power came along with them, that it had a ſavour for many days; for I got leave to make application of them to myſelf. Then I reſolved to go to the table of the Lord with both joy and ſorrow; ſorrow for my ſins, and joy that God had laid his avenging hand upon Chriſt, and therefore he would not lay it upon me. I went to the table in the faith of it, wondering at the love of God; and he ſweetly manifeſted

himſelf to my ſoul. O that I could praiſe the Lord for his love.—When I was about to remove from the table, I was ſore afraid that I would again diſhonour God by unbelief, or by complying with Satan's temptations. However, I was enabled to take a new gripe of the promiſe that I got in the time of temptations before. The word of the Lord is the ground of my hope. And when I was coming away from the table theſe words came ſweetly in my mind, *Fear not to go down to Egypt; for I will ſurely bring thee up again.*

One Sabbath-day in the month of Auguſt, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Jer. iv. 2. *The nations ſhall bleſs themſelves in the Lord, and in him ſhall they glory.* One head of the doctrine was to ſpeak of the *ſeaſons* that we are to glory in the Lord. Among the meany ſeaſons he mentioned, that we were to glory in the Lord, the time of *trouble* was one:—the time of Satan's *temptations* was another:—and a third when the *law* came for the *debt of obedience.* On this head he obſerved, "That the ghoſt of the old huſband is ſometimes as "frightſome as the huſband itſelf." But when this is the caſe, he told his hearers, they might ſay, "O "law, thou haſt gotten more glory from Chriſt, my "huſband, than if I had ſtood in the ſtate wherein I "was created: for, he who made the law, hath *mag-* "*nified the law,* and *made it honourable.*"—Another ſeaſon that we were to glory in the Lord was at *death*; becauſe Chriſt hath unſtinged death; *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?*—A fifth ſeaſon that we were to glory in the Lord was in view of appearing before the *judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.* We are to glory in him then becauſe he is near of kin unto us. ——O that I could praiſe the Lord for ſuch a day. I muſt acknowledge, that this was one of the moſt glorious days that ever I beheld: it was like an emblem of heaven; for the glory of the Lord ſo filled my ſoul, that I got liberty to glory in him as my Huſband, as my Redeemer, and as my near Kinſman. O that I

could bleſs him for the goſpel of Chriſt, being an account of his love, and the greateſt proof of it. I believe his love with application to myſelf; and I deſire to be in him.

The next Sabbath morning, as I was going to the ordinances, the adverſary ſuggeſted that I would fall a prey to him one day or other, and ſo wound religion. At this I was ſore grieved; for I knew, that by the deceitfulneſs of my own heart, and the temptations of Satan, I would fall a prey to him, if the Lord did not uphold me. But then, O how ſweetly were theſe words borne in upon my mind, Pſalm cxxi. 3. *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not ſlumber.* O how ſweet were theſe words to me? for I got leave to glory in the Lord as my keeper. This was a day of power indeed, as ever I felt: I ſaw that it was the ſpirit of the Lord ſpeaking by his ſervant. O that I could bleſs the Lord that ever he brought me under Mr. Cock's miniſtry; for he has often been the miniſter of Chriſt to my ſoul.

The ſacrament was to be diſpenſed at Glaſgow, Auguſt 31ſt, 1755. Some time before this, I was under ſore affliction for ſome time; and my trouble was ſo very great, that I thought it might be death. Whereupon theſe words came into my mind with power; *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come; and will not tarry.* O when will that *little while* paſs away? O when will all theſe ſhadows flee away, and that day come when I ſhall have uninterrupted communion with thyſelf, and no doubts about the truth of promiſes, no faint views, no queſtioning our intereſt in them, but then a day without a cloud in it, or a night to follow it? O come my lovely Lord Jeſus, come ſpeedily.

I ſaw it to be a rod, however, in the hand of a loving Father. But, one thing that grieved me was, I thought the Lord was chaſtizing me for ſins formerly committed in attending on ordinances; on account of which I thought the Lord might keep me away from

the ſacrament which was at hand. But it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer to bear in on my mind, by his word and Spirit, that he would both deliver me from my trouble, and bring me to the ordinances. And ſo it fell out; for I got a very remarkable deliverance from my trouble, and I went to the ſacrament.

On the Saturday I got leave to hear with application. But on the Sabbath morning, theſe words haunted me, Exod. xxxiii. 3. *I will not go up in the midſt of thee, for thou art a ſtiff-necked people; leſt I conſume thee in the way.* Oh! how did theſe words grieve me? I could not think of his wrath flaming againſt Iſrael.—I went to prayer, crying, *See, O God, our ſhield; look on the face of thine anointed dear, thy dear Son;* with many more petitions; but found no comfort. I was ſore grieved for the congregation, leſt the Lord ſhould make a breach upon us, as he did on the ſons of Aaron, becauſe they offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: *And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord,* Lev. x. 2. I was afraid that ſome of us might offer ſtrange fire before the Lord, and ſo provoke him to make a breach upon us. I fell proſtrate with my face towards the ground, grieving for my own ſins and for the ſins of God's Iſrael; and earneſtly begged that he would purge away our ſins, for his name's ſake; and come forth with miniſter's and people to the feaſt, and glorify himſelf, ſhewing mercy to us notwithſtanding of our rebellion and ungratefulneſs to him: and praying that his preſence might go with us, and that will make a gladſome feaſt.—And I muſt ſay to the praiſe of the Lord, that he condeſcended to hear unworthy me; and by his word and Spirit ſhined in upon my ſoul that I was filled with wonder at his love. The words which he brought to my mind were Exod. xxiv. 8, 11. *And Moſes took the blood, and ſprinkled it on the people, and ſaid, Behold the blood of the covenant.—And upon the nobles of the children of Iſrael*

he laid not his hand: alſo they ſaw God, and did eat and drink.—O how ſweet were theſe words to my ſoul! O what joy was it to my ſoul to ſee that God had laid his avenging hand upon glorious Chriſt, and would not lay it upon us! I then went to the meeting-houſe, wondering at his love, and ſat down at the firſt table.

Mr. Fiſher, at that time, preached on Pſalm xxiv. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting doors, and the King of glory ſhall come in.* After explaining the words, he obſerved the following doctrine, *viz.* "That as there is a ſolemn charge given "to ſinners of mankind, in the diſpenſation of the "goſpel, to open or lift up the doors of their hearts "to Chriſt, the King of glory, in a way of believing; "ſo it is ſecured, by promiſe, that he ſhall come in." In diſcourſing the ſubject, he propoſed to do the following things, 1. To ſpeak of the ſolemn charge here given to ſinners of mankind, to lift up, or open the everlaſting doors of their hearts. 2. To ſpeak of the King of glory, in whoſe favour acceſs to the heart is demanded. 3. To ſpeak of the promiſe of his in-coming to the heart of ſinners. And then to apply the ſubject. — And I muſt ſay to the praiſe of the Lord, this was as joyful a day as ever I ſaw all my life-time: for a bright diſplay of redeeming love did with power ſhine in upon my ſoul. This whole day I got leave to delight myſelf in his love; and I had little moleſtation from enemies without or within my own heart.——When Mr. Fiſher came to ſpeak of the King of glory's opening the heart of ſinners, I got leave to reflect upon the work of the Spirit of God upon my own ſoul, in the day of my firſt believing. O what unſpeakable joy did this fill my ſoul with! He ſaid, among other things, "If your hearts have been opened to the King of "glory, in a way of believing, your affections of love, "deſire, and eſteem, will be ſtrongly moving out towards him; or, at leaſt, you will know ſometimes

" what it is to be ſick of love: that is, to have a ſoul-
" ſickneſs becauſe you cannot get him loved according
" to his worth." And this was the grief of my heart, that I loved glorious Chriſt ſo little, when I ſaw ſo much of his love to my own ſoul. O this is joy above all the joys of this world, to have this concluſion ſurely ſealed, *Chriſt is mine and I am his.* O wonderful love to a poor ſinful wretch that has ten thouſand times over grieved the good Spirit of God: and every ſin deſerved to be ſealed up to damnation. O how did this inflame the love of my ſoul to him who is altogether lovely! And I deſired to be with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from his glorious face again; and where I would not be afraid of a deceitful heart to diſhonour God any more; nor ever any more be afraid of Satan's temptations.

Never doth a ſoul lie lower in the duſt, and abhore itſelf, than when the Lord makes the moſt ſingular manifeſtations of his grace and love to it. And I muſt ſay, to his praiſe, upon the laſt day of this feaſt, his marriage robes ſmelled of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby I was made exceeding glad. I came away from this ſolemnity rejoicing in the faithfulneſs of God, who hath accompliſhed his promiſes; ſo that I was made to ſay, *Not one word of that which the Lord ſpake hath failed.* But when I came home again, and fell to my ordinary employment, the Lord hid his glorious face. I went to prayer, in order to plead that he would return again, and let me have communion, peace, joy, and comfort in the ſeaſons of duty again. I got no comfort; and a dark day of deſertion, and ſome combats with Satan's temptations followed. I was made to cry, *O that it were with me as in months paſt, when the candle of the Lord did ſhine upon my tabernacle.* The hiding of his countenance was my great burden. And methought he ſaid too, *It is expedient for you that I go away.* I was much afraid to enter into the cloud: it continued, however,

about three months. And I had the roaring lion to grapple with, who loves well to fiſh in muddy waters.

Another thing that burdened me much was, that ordinances were taſtleſs to my ſoul. Before this time Sabbath-days were to me heaven upon earth. O the preſence of God in ordinances. O the taſte of that joy my ſoul hath been made to taſte of in ordinances! The fulneſs whereof is in heaven. The ſtate of this mortality cannot bear the fulneſs of that joy. At one time I got ſuch a glimpſe of his glory, I could hold no more in this clay veſſel: it ſo wrought upon the very body, by ſympathy with the ſoul. O with what vigorous deſires did my ſoul long for that day, when this body of mine would be caſt into a new mould, that I might be ever with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from his glorious countenance? O that I could mourn over theſe ſins that provoked him to withhold the light of his countenance from my ſoul. And no wonder tho' Chriſt ſuffered me to ſeek long ere I found it again; ſeeing I had given him ſo little room in my heart when he was preſent.

About this time I heard Mr. M'Cara preach on the Sabbath-days for ſeveral weeks: but ſtill the Lord hid his face; and I could not be duly burdened when the glory was departed from me. Then I thought, O that I were at home at our own miniſter again. Then I imagined I would have ſome communion and nearneſs with God; for Mr. Cock's preachings had been exceeding refreſhing to me before now.

On the firſt Sabbath after I came home, Mr. Cock preached on Pſalm cxix. 10. *Let me not wander from thy commandements.* I looked for comfort; but inſtead of that, I was filled with ſorrow: for he ſpoke much of the wanderings and ſtrayings of the ſaints. Then I was afraid that I would diſhonour God as they had done: for the fire of ſin is a burden that I win little above. The Lord knows that I am more afraid of ſin, than of hell, or of death. The enemy ſtrongly ſug-

geſted to me, that it was pride and groſs hypocriſy in my heart, to think that I was a ſaint. But I ſtudied to improve a covenant-relation with God, who had ſo far condeſcended to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me after all I had done. When I thought how I had diſhonoured God, by unbelief, before this time, I had no will to do it again. But the enemy did purſued me; making me believe that I would one day or other fall by his hand.——When I was coming home, the adverſary gave me a new onſet, and told me, I might ſtay away from the ordinances till Mr. Cock had done with preaching on that text. To which I replyed, This is not God's way; for he delights more in the dwellings of Jacob, than in all the gates of Sion. At which theſe words were borne in upon my mind, 2 Tim. iv. 3. *For the time will come when they will not endure ſound doctrine.* I took this to be a reproof from God for my ſins: for I knew the doctrine was ſound, although I could not endure to hear it. It pleaſed the Lord, however, after this, to rebuke the tempter for a time. And Mr. Cock, preached on John x. 14. *I am the good ſhepherd, and know my ſheep; and am known of mine.* And I muſt ſay to the Lord's praiſe, he did with power ſhine upon his word and ordinances again, and filled my ſoul with joy and peace in believing. Sometimes when Mr. Cock read over this text, it was like a preaching to me; I ſaw ſo much of Chriſt in it, and the relation he ſtands in to us.

Now the year 1755 is ended: and I cannot but ſay to the praiſe of my Lord, altho' a year of great temptations from Satan; yet a year alſo of the moſt glorious manifeſtations of Chriſt that ever I enjoyed. And may ſay to his praiſe, he made Sabbaths my delight, the holy of the Lord and honourable: and he cauſed me to ride upon the high places of the earth; and fed me with the heritage of Jacob.

PERIOD SEVENTH.

This period preſents us with an account of her exerciſe during the year 1756; the temptations ſhe met with from Satan, and how ſhe was enabled to repel them: together with the ſignal manifeſtation of the love of God ſhe met with, in attending on ſome communion ſolemnities, with the concern ſhe had on her ſpirit for the nation in general, and particularly for the congregation ſhe lived in; and the gracious return made to her requeſts.

IN the beginning of the year 1756, Mr. Cock preached on Iſa. xxvi. 9. *When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs.* The doctrine he inſiſted on was to this purpoſe, "When God's judgments are abroad in the earth, all "ought to learn righteouſneſs; but ſome only will "learn righteouſneſs." He ſpoke very much of the ſin-procuring judgments; and of the likeneſs and ſimiliarity that took place between the ſins and the judgments. Some times when I was hearing theſe ſermons, my ſoul was made to tremble for fear of the Lord's righteous judgments; for, at this time, there were ſeveral ſignal evidences that the Lord's righteous judgments were abroad in the earth: great claps of thunder, fire, hail, ſtormy-winds, and earthquakes were in divers places, beſides many ſpiritual judgments. All this made my ſoul within me to tremble for fear of his righteous judgments. Yet I may ſay to his praiſe, he kept the faith of his redeeming love in my view; and this kept me from fainting. Sometimes I was made to come to the Lord burdened with my own ſins and the ſins of the land; and made to cry, O my Father, the hope of Iſrael and Saviour thereof, in time of trouble.

Some time after this, it pleaſed the Lord to manifeſt

himſelf to me, even unworthy me, both in duties and ordinances; and eſpecially the duties of meditation. O but the love of glorious Chriſt is a ſweet field to meditate on. I have juſt reaſon to acknowledge to his praiſe, that he condeſcended ſo far to me, for ſome time, as to give me a blink of his glorious countenance every day, in one duty or another. O wonderful love, that ever he loved ſo unworthy a creature. O Sirs, the glorious beauty that I ſaw in him! he is the God-man; Immanual, God with us. Yea, I ſay, his glorious beauty has raviſhed my heart, and filled my ſoul with vehement deſires to be with the Lord: and this made me to cry, "O time, time; O cruel time, that haſteth "not thy paces, that long eternity might approach, "that I might win to the full communion with him." I ſaw ſuch excellency in glorious Chriſt, that darkened all created glories. O that I could love my altogether lovely Lord. But, alas! this idol of ſelf many a time pulls the crown off the head of my lovely Lord, and ſets it upon the head of ſinful ſelf: but, O that he may wear the crown and poſſeſs the throne in my heart for ever and ever.

So violent, however, were the temptations of the ſtrong enemy, that his fiery darts were as a ſword within my bowels.—By this time my health was very much broken, and the weak body ſcarce able to ſubſiſt any longer, which threw me in a fever. For ſome days the enemy did ſorely aſſault me, that for the moſt part of ſeven nights and days I ſlept little at all; ſleep really became a terror to me: and my body was ſo very weak, that I thought death might be in the cup; and becauſe I thought it might be death, I told very much of my mind both to our miniſter, and ſome other chriſtians; but eſpecially to our miniſter.

On the back of thus communicating my mind to Mr. Cock and others, the Lord brought in upon my mind with power, thoſe words in Job v. 19. *He will deliver thee in ſix troubles; yea, in ſeven there ſhall no*

evil touch thee. From this I ſaw that the Lord would yet turn me back to the wilderneſs again; nevertheleſs he made me willing. But the enemy ſtrongly aſſaulted me with that temptation, For all the profeſſion I had made in religion, I would yet fall into ſin, and diſhonour God. Between this and that of pride of graces, to pull the crown off glorious Chriſt's head and to ſet it upon the head of ſelf, ſinful ſelf, Ah! how did the enemy aſſault me! But it pleaſed the Lord to rebuke the tempter, and the fever both. And I have juſt reaſon to ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord, he was very kind to me; and gave me now and then a blink of his glorious countenance through the whole time of this fever.—O that I could praiſe him for his love! O wonderful love! it is not the manner of man, O Lord, to give love for rebellion. O love him; O my ſoul love him.

It was agreed that the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper was to be diſpenſed at Crawfurd's-dyke on the laſt Sabbath of May 1756.—Upon the Sabbath-day before the preparation, Mr. Cock preached on Luke xiii. 24. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate.* This was a day I thought the Spirit of the Lord bore witneſs with him, that he was ſent expreſs from Chriſt his maſter, with a commiſſion to us. And it was a day in which I was made glad, and induced to rejoice: and I was big with expectations that the Lord's preſence would be with us at the approaching ſolemnity. But the next Sabbath, which was the preparation, Mr. Cock preached on another text, and I was diſappointed: I imagined he would be on the fore-mentioned text again; for he promiſed he would give ſome marks of thoſe who had entered in at the ſtrait gate: but the Lord hid his face, and my heart plagues prevailed.—Then began I to enquire after the cauſe of it; and I ſaw that I had not given God the glory of what countenance he had given to his ſervant. This grieved me much, that I had ſinned the Lord away from his ſervant, and from my-

ſelf alſo.—When I was thus in my confuſion the tempter was not idle; he would have me to believe that our miniſter had forſaken the Lord, and the Lord would not countenance him again.

The night before the faſt-day, I was in our miniſter's houſe, and ſaw him in ſome confuſion on account of ſome diſorder in his family. I was uneaſy, and ſaid to him, Sir, I am grieved to ſee you ſo perplexed. He ſaid to me, I cannot help it now. And he moreover ſaid, I have much need of your ſympathy. Ah! this was like feul to fire the temptation; and unbelief was ſo ſtrong with me, that when I went to prayer for him, I could neither get liberty for him, nor yet for the Lord's coming to the feaſt. And to increaſe my grief, theſe words haunted me, *They have forſaken me the fountain of living waters.* Now, had this been true, it would have put the ſacrificing knife to the throat of the promiſe; for many a time I have gotten acceſs to plead with the Lord for him: and the promiſe, with a majeſty, luſtre, and divine power borne in with the word; which no deluſion can have, neither from Satan or any of his temptations. Sometimes the Lord did bear in his own word with ſuch majeſtic power and ſweetneſs, as that I was made to ſay, *It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh.*—There is always ſomething in Chriſt's voice that is not in Satan's, nor any of his temptations.

On Saturday, our ſermons were very ſweet to me; but eſpecially Mr. Cock on the Sabbath-day. O how ſhall I put an obſerve on the Lord's loving-kindneſs this day! When Mr. Cock came out in the morning he ſeemed to have much of the Lord's preſence with him: yea, I thought every word he ſpoke had a majeſty and a divine power coming along with it. I muſt acknowledge that this was one of the moſt glorious days that ever I beheld: it was like an emblem of heaven; for the glory of the Lord filled the houſe.

Mr. Cock's action-ſermon, at this time, was on Rev.

xix. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herſelf ready.* This was a very remarkable and ſavoury diſcourſe to my ſoul. Among many other things he ſaid, "This is a remarkable day; a great day, on three accounts: 1. It is a feſtival-day; 2. It is a coronation-day; 3. It is a marriage-day: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.* He alſo ſaid, "There is not one within this houſe, but they are married to one of two huſbands; ye are either married to the glorious and worthy Lamb, or ye are married to the law; and that huſband will curſe you to your face."—He called us all to match with the worthy Lamb; and ſaid, "Whatever contemptible an eye ye may look on us with, O look not with a contemptible eye upon the worthy and glorious Lamb." Then he "obteſted and beſeeched us, by all the joys of heaven, and by all the torments of hell, to match with the worthy and glorious Lamb; then it would be a day of gladneſs to the Lamb, and alſo a day of gladneſs to the bride, the Lamb's wife: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.*" He had ſome remarks how the bride the Lamb's wife had made herſelf ready.—He told us, "That if any deſerved a rich and wealthy bride, it was the Lamb; but inſtead of that, he got her a divour, and he left her one: for no ſooner was ſhe out of arrears to law and juſtice, but ſhe was deep in arrears to the ſovereign grace of God."—He alſo ſaid, "She was a naked bride, a blind bride, and a deaf bride; yea, in ſome ſenſe ſhe was worſe than the devils; for the devils never rejected ſo many offers of the Lamb."—And he likewiſe ſaid, "Withal ſhe is unwilling; for ſhe is tied neck and heel to the covenant of works." O this was a day that the Lord ſurprized me with his loving-kindneſs. Mr. Cock moreover added, "Take it for a good token, the Lord's appearing here this day, that he will yet do great things amongſt this poor handful in Crawfurd's-dyke." At hearing this, I was extreme-

ly glad; for the burden of this congregation lay much upon my ſpirit: and ſometimes I got the promiſe that the Lord would do good with the goſpel in it. Many a requeſt I have had for it, that it might become fruitful, and bring forth many ſons and daughters to Chriſt; and was anſwered with that word, Pſalm lxviii. 31. *Ethiopia ſhall ſoon ſtretch out her hands to God.*

This day I got leave to hear the action-ſermon with both joy and ſorrow; ſorrow for my ſins, eſpecially the ſin of unbelief; when I ſaw how I had pierced glorious Chriſt, I was diſpoſed to cry out, O that I could weep over my ſins, if it were poſſible, with tears of blood: yet I was filled with joy and wonder at his redeeming love. O Sirs, I got leave to behold love ſhining in a cup of red wine: O that I could praiſe him for his love.—But before I roſe from the table of the Lord, I was ſore afraid that I would diſhonour God again: but when my ſpirit was overwhelmed within me, for fear of ſin, I muſt ſay to his praiſe, O how ſweetly did the Spirit of God ſhine upon thoſe words, Mal. iii. 10. *Prove me now herewith, ſaith the Lord.* O how did that attribute, the faithfulneſs of God, ſhine forth in thoſe words, *Prove me now?* I thought it was, as if the Lord had ſaid to me, in times of temptations, when thy foot had almoſt ſlidden, did I not uphold thee? To which I replied, that is ſure, thou didſt uphold me, O Lord. And alſo, as if the Lord had ſaid, *Prove me now* for times to come.—O that I could praiſe him for his love! his love is unparalleled love: if we would have a parallel to his love, we muſt leave the earth and go away to heaven, and ſee the *Father loving him*, as *he hath loved us*, John xv. 9.

On the back of this communion, I cannot but ſay that the impreſſions of what I met with were ſweet to me for ſometime; yea, I had a great pleaſure in thinking upon, and alſo in telling to others, what God had done for my ſoul. Likewiſe thoſe with whom I conferred about thoſe things, told me, that this commu-

nion was to them as great a day of the Son of Man, as for a great while they had experienced; which was very desirable tidings to me.—O this duty of meditation was very profitable and sweet to me, in which I really found much of the Lord's presence with power: and when I was helped to keep at this duty, I found my spiritual enemies not so strong.—For two weeks I lived as it had been in the suburbs of heaven, when I thought on the Lord's loving-kindness to my soul. He did not satisfy the vehement desires of my soul, so as to give me heaven in its full possession; yet I must say, to his praise, he gave me a heaven some times upon the earth.

Sometime after this, the sacrament was to be dispensed in Glasgow, in Mr. Fisher's congregation. On Saturday I went to hear sermon in the Church-yard; and Mr. M'Cara was on these words, Isa. xl. 20. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* He spoke well to my case.—— Mr. Horn preached on Rom. x. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* He said, "I will give you two marks of trial, whereby ye may know if ye have submitted yourselves to the righteousness of God: If so, ye have seen the spirituality of the law to be exceeding broad, extending not only to the outward man, but to the thoughts and secrets of the heart; and ye have also seen the corruptions of your own hearts, which has rendered you vile and ugly."—Mr. Cock preached in the evening on 1 Kings viii. 38. *Know every one the plagues of his own heart.* I got leave to apply. This was a sweet time to me: I was banqueted in the house of love.

On the Sabbath morning I came to the first table. Mr. Fisher was on 1 Pet. ii. 7. *Unto you that believe he is precious.* He held out every thing in Christ to be precious to the believer. I got leave to hear with joy:

and when I came out to the tent, Mr. James Erſkine was on theſe words, Exod. xxxiii. 18. *And he ſaid, I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory.* He then ſpoke of the ſeaſons that believer's ſaw the glory of God in: and told us, that the Lord led ſome believers to the foot of mount Sinai, and there diſcovered to them the glory of his grace. O how ſweet was this ſermon to me! it was ſweet in hearing, and ſweet in meditation; for I got leave to make application to myſelf.

On Monday, the laſt day of the ſolemnity, I heard Mr. M'Cara on 2 Cor. viii. 5. *But firſt gave their own-ſelves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God.* He then ſpoke much of what this giving imported: and ſaid, among other things, it imported, "That they ſaw Chriſt to be a ſuitable match for them: and what did they give him? *Their own-ſelves;* their ſouls and their bodies: yea, in a word, they gave him *all* that they had." This day I made a new reſignation of myſelf away to the Lord. But after I came home again, I found the frame of my ſpirit growing very carnal: this afflicted me mightily. Through the week I was in a very ill caſe; being deſerted, I could do nothing but ſin. When I went to duty, I was ſo ſeized with ſleep, that I could not open my mouth.—In this melancholy caſe I could do nothing but ſigh and groan; and I longed for the Sabbath again, that I might win to the ordinances. Oh! what a burden did all duties become to me! Prayer became a burden; writing became a burden, although I have found much of God in them. This verified that word of our Lord to me, *Without me ye can do nothing.*

On Sabbath morning I was in a very dead and confuſed frame of ſpirit: and, O but the body of ſin and death grew ſtrong. My idols had too much room in my heart, which was like to be my death: yet none of theſe ſins could hinder the Lord to manifeſt more and more of his love to me: when I came to the ordinances, I muſt ſay to his praiſe, he did not diſappoint me. O

the ſweet intercourſe I got of his love! Mr. Cook being on the foreſaid text, Rev. xix. 7. he gave ſome marks of theſe who were truly married to the Lamb: and I got leave to apply them. And I may ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord, many a glorious day did I enjoy under his miniſtry. I found a great deal of the Spirit and power of God in his ſermons; and there was ſcarce any ſecret in my heart but he was directed to ſpeak to it.—O that I could bleſs the Lord that ever he brought me under his miniſtrations.

Whileſt the Lord continued to ſhine upon me with the light of his countenance, my mountain then ſtood ſtrong; but no ſooner did he hide his face than trouble preſently enſued. After this diſplay of his goodneſs, I met with a ſore trial; for a ſtorm and tempeſt of ſpiritual pride, and that abominable thing, ſelf; what name ſhall I give it? it is a great deceiver; it is a God-diſhonouring and a ſoul-deſtroying thing. Then I was afraid leſt all the duties I had performed ſhould receive no other ſtamp, but ſelf-ſeeking. I ſaw ſo much of ſelf in ſpeaking, ſo much of ſelf in writing, that I was afraid if ever the world ſaw them, they would diſhonour God, there was ſo much of ſelf in them. O that abominable thing, ſelf. O ſelf, that woful thing ſelf; it will not be ſatisfied unleſs it ride ſide for ſide, ſo to ſpeak, with glorious Chriſt: yea, and it pulls the crown off Chriſt's head. O the pride of my heart, it would de-throne glorious Chriſt out of my heart.—— This was very diſtreſſing to me: but then theſe words were borne in on my mind, Pſal. cxxxvii. 9. *Happy ſhall he be that taketh and daſheth thy little ones againſt the ſtones.* This was a little comfortable to me.

On the back of this, I met with a ſore trial from my mother, as many a one I have met with. Then I made application to him who is the hearer of prayer; and was anſwered, *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation: but in me ye ſhall have peace.* At this my corruptions flew up againſt the will of God; and the very thoughts

of the croſs terrified me. Many a time before this, I thought I would be content to have Chriſt, with croſs or crown: but now the croſs of Chriſt affrighted me; for I was terrified, that when a day of trial came, all my reſolutions would blow up. I was apprehenſive I would be like the young man in the goſpel who came to Chriſt, as if he would have done any thing for eternal life; and yet when he was put to it, he went away ſorrowful: for I felt it was impoſſible for me to be denied to myſelf; O that abominable thing, ſelf, which pulls the crown off Chriſt's head.—O that he would deliver me from that woful diſtemper of ſelf-ſeeking. I truly think it is one of the moſt difficult parts in religion, to get ſelf caſt out, and God's glory put in the room of it. Ah! the enmity I found in my mind againſt God. ——One night I fell a wondering if there were a name in Chriſt to anſwer ſuch a condition as mine is, who am ſo proud, ſo rebellious, ſo ſelfiſh a creature. Whereupon I was anſwered with theſe words, *Thou haſt received gifts for men, for ſuch as did rebel.*—O what ſweetneſs I found in theſe words! O that I could praiſe him for his love!

About this time the Lord's judgments were abroad in the earth: a bloody ſword was already drawn; and I was afraid that as the ſhedding of the ſaints blood had been Scotland's ſin, that the ſhedding of blood may be Scotland's judgment. When I thought upon Scotland's ſin, I was afraid our ſins would provoke the Lord to depart from us, which made me to cry to the Lord that he would graciouſly condeſcend to grant me theſe three petitions.

1. That he would never take away the glorious goſpel from poor Scotland; for, if he take away his ordinances, he will not ſtay behind them. And here I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of the Lord, he has been to me the hearer of prayer; and he has given me his word for the ground of my hope, Iſa. xlix. 16. *Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are*

continually before me: and *my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt,* Pſalm lxxxix. 28.

2. My ſecond petition was, That whatſoever furnace of affliction it pleaſed the Lord to caſt me into, that he would grant me his preſence in the furnace; for it is the preſence of the Lord that makes a furnace ſweet. And I think the glorious hearer of prayer ſaid unto me, *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles; yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee,* Job v. 19.

3. My third petition was, That the Lord would give me my bread in a ſolitary way, if it be for his glory, I ſee the world to be ſuch an enemy to religion. Many a time it has interrupted my ſweet communion with my glorious huſband Chriſt. But in this matter I deſire to put a blank in Chriſt's hand. Give me, O Lord, what thou wilt: but keep me from a worldly ſpirit; and keep me about thy hand, O Lord.

About this time, I muſt ſay, and to the glory of God be it ſpoken, this was a time that the Lord gave me many promiſes, both for the church, and for particular perſons; and he hath accompliſhed ſome of them. O for more faith upon God, for there is not one diſcovery of the faithfulneſs of God, but it hath a voice, and cryeth out, O believe him who is able to give an accompliſhment unto his word. O that I knew how to commend the Lord's way to all, both to ſtrangers and friends; and it becomes me well ſo to do. Yet at this time it was a trial to me to know how to reconcile providences and the promiſes together. Although about this time I had heard many ſweet and comfortable ſermons; many glorious days did I enjoy under Mr. Cock's miniſtry: yet the congregation lay ill heavy on my ſpirit. It grieved me that ſo very few matched with the worthy and glorious Lamb. The Lord only knows what grief it hath been to me, when I was banquetted in the houſe of love, that ſo few would come and ſee, come and taſte of his love. This made me many a time to cry to the Lord for a

day of his power to the congregation; so that many souls might be convinced and converted. And I think the glorious hearer of prayer has given me his promise, for a ground of faith, that he will grant me my petitions. See Psalm lxviii. 31. Isa. xli. 14, 15.

PERIOD EIGHTH.

In this period we are presented with a melancholy situation she was plunged into, after her former high attainments. She is deserted of God, the duties of religion become a burden to her, and Satan is let loose upon her with great fury: together with the relief she found, and the gracious interviews she met with from the Lord, in attending upon him in duties and ordinances.

IT is with pleasure I have it to remark, and I acknowledge it to the glory and praise of the most high God, that for two years before this time, I durst not in the least doubt of my interest in glorious Christ: I enjoyed more near and sweet communion with God than ever I had done before, both in prayer, in meditation, and hearing the word.—Yet there is one thing I have to observe, that the nearer access I got to my dear Lord, the stronger were my assaults on the back of it.

I was informed that the sacrament was to be dispensed at Glasgow, in the month of June, 1757. I resolved to attend the solemnity: and when I came to place, O how sweet and refreshful were these sermons to me! till the Sabbath evening I heard Mr. M'Cara preach on Mark x. concerning the young man in the gospel,—how great a length one may come in religion and yet lack the *one thing*, as that man did. This occasioned disquietude in me, lest I should prove the same. I fell under apprehensions that all my resolu-

ons would blow up, when a day of trial cometh, and be like that young man who came to Chriſt, as if he would have done any thing for eternal life; and yet when he was put to it, *he went away ſorrowful*, whenever Chriſt touched him in his predominant.

Mr. M'Cara preached on Monday, being the laſt day of the feaſt: and I may ſay it was the great day of it to me. He was on 2 John 8. *Look to yourſelves, that we loſe not thoſe things which we have wrought.* He ſpoke of the times that believers gained, and how they came to loſe theſe things they had wrought. Mr. Horn cloſed the work on theſe words, *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the faith, quit you like men, be ſtrong.* He exhorted us to ſtand faſt in the ſpiritual warfare, and to quit ourſelves like men. And I am ſure he ſpoke as directly to my caſe, as if he had known it: but, being convinced of the treachery of my own heart, I durſt put no truſt in it; and I wanted faith to truſt Chriſt with the keeping of it. Alas! how was I then burdened with fear of diſhonouring God, and wounding religion! I was afraid I would fall ſome day by the hand of the enemy: this embittered all my comforts.

I am now in a great ſtrait how to record what grief, trouble, and anguiſh of ſpirit I was brought under after this communion; a ſcene of perplexing fears enſued, leſt all I had attained to would turn out to naught; and all my reſolutions prove like the morning cloud, and the early dew, that ſoon paſſeth away.

One day I was looking on a ſermon, on theſe words, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* The author ſpoke to many caſes that might be perplexing, and to the ſins of the tempted: He obſerved, "That the great ſin of the tempted lay in miſbelief of the promiſes, and the power of God to keep them in the hour of temptation." When I ſaw this, I was filled with wonder and admiration, at the goodneſs of God to ſo unworthy, ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I was. I thought it was a wonder the Lord did not let

me fall into puniſhment for the ſin of unbelief. I went into a room, and fell down on my face, reſolved to ſacrifice to God the ſacrifice of thanſgiving for this inſtance of faithfulneſs, and the many great deliverances he hath given to me, out of the hand of the enemy. O how ſhall I record the long-ſuffering patience of the Lord, who did not manifeſt himſelf to me in wrath for ſo doing. I got leave to act faith, and to pour out my ſoul into his boſom: but I got not out of the place till a meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet me, and I had a thorne in the fleſh to grapple with. The adverſary gave me a terrible onſet; and told me, I only loved God for his deliverance, not for his holineſs; and that this was but a mark of hypocrites, who love God only for his benefits, not for his holineſs.—O difficult work; it is not eaſy to know what it is to love God for his holineſs. When I looked into the ſcripture, I ſaw that it was the practice of the ſaints to love the Lord, becauſe he did ſo and ſo: but what it was to love God for his holineſs, is no ſmall difficulty for me to know.

After this I fell under an extraordinary deadneſs, ſo that I could apply myſelf to nothing; duties were a very burden to me, and that becauſe I found not the Lord in them. All the glorious days I had enjoyed were no comfort to me. Theſe words often haunted my mind, Luke xxii. 32. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* with John xvi. 22. *And ye now therefore have ſorrow; but I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoice.* But I was greatly afraid that the cloud would remain long upon my ſoul.

The time of our ſacrament being to be diſpenſed, drew near; the thought of which bred many doubts in my mind what to do, knowing that I was not in a communion frame and diſpoſition. Mr. M'Cara preached the faſt-day, on Heb. x. 22. *Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith.* He ſpoke to many difficulties that were in the way of drawing near

to God: but my greateſt difficulty he ſpoke not to.— In the time of the Saturday's ſermons I was like a dead dog, or an unclean beaſt. Oh! the confuſion I was in! and when I went to duty, my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

On the Sabbath morning, Mr. Cock preached on Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the Man that is my Fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts: ſmite the Shepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.* He had a great ſermon, and very comfortable; but my deadneſs was ſo exceeding great, that I could not take comfort. And when he came to fence the tables, I thought he cut me off; for he cut off all from that holy table, that had inbred murdering thoughts. Then I preſently concluded I was guilty: for, although I never had thoughts of murdering any body, how often have I been haunted with thoughts of ſelf-murder! From day to day have they haunted me like a ghoſt, although I abhorred them, and was ſore afraid leſt I ſhould be ſwallowed up with the violence of this temptation. But bleſſed be the Lord who always made a way of eſcape. Some may think this a very ſtrange temptation, a ſin againſt the very light of nature, and the very letter of the law of God, *Thou ſhalt not kill.* Ah! the confuſion I was in: and I almoſt concluded that I would not communicate this day; yet there was a ſecret word borne in on me, *Is this thy kindneſs for thy friend?* When Mr. Fiſher invited us to come to the laſt table, he ſaid, "Altho' you cannot ſay with the woman, that you love much, becauſe much is forgiven you; yet if ye can ſee and ſay that ye have much to be forgiven, we bid you come to the Lord's table." On hearing this, I preſently thought he invited me; for I have much to be forgiven: and then I aroſe and went to the table; but my Lord was abſent.

When the ſolemn work of the day was over, I retired to a ſecret place to pray, thinking that perhaps I

might meet with the Lord: but there was nothing but deadneſs; and I was greatly afraid that the cloud would be of a long continuance. Oh! I could not think of the hidings of the Lord's gracious face. I received a ſtrong conviction for my ſin and folly this day; eſpecially how ungrateful I proved to ſo kind a Lord: and alſo for grieving the heart of our miniſter; for I told him he had cut me off in fencing the tables. When I did ſo, he indeed told me, it was a temptation of Satan; and if I neglected the duty of communicating, I might come to ſmart for it afterwards.—I reſolved, that the firſt occaſion of that nature that offered, I ſhould not do as I had done this day.

In this melancholly ſituation, O what burden did all religious duties become to me! verily I thought it was a wearineſs to ſerve the Lord, when I could not find him in the duty.—And amidſt all my down-caſtings, I had the roaring lion to grapple with, who loves well to fiſh in muddy waters. The enemy would often perſuade me, that there was no reality in religion.—However, theſe conſiderations enabled me not to credit it. 1. If there were no reality in religion, how comes it to paſs that graceleſs ſinners, when they come to die, when people are for ordinary moſt ſerious, do ſo frequently deſire to be religious? 2. If there be no reality in religion, how comes it to paſs, that the religious are ſo often encouraged by God, in the practice and profeſſion of religion; and meet with ſo many mercies from the God they ſerve; and many of theſe mercies come to them as the anſwer of their prayers? 3. If there be no reality in religion, how comes it to paſs, that the judgments threatened againſt the wicked, in God's word, have ſo frequently ſuch an exact accompliſhment?—But we have need to take heed of fighting againſt Satan with human reaſon; for that leviathan laughs at the ſhaking of this ſpear, his ſkin is too thick, and his ſcales too cloſs to be pierced by it.

Did Satan leave me ſo? No, no: He came ſo fiercely on me, and to ſuch a degree, that I was tempted

again to ſelf-murder. Then I cryed to the Lord, and ſaid, *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath choſen Jeruſalem rebuke thee.*

Whatever has been in my lot of judgments or mercies, I ſee matter for a ſong. 1. The judgment of *temptations*; they are not like the gall of aſps, bitter and deadly: but like good rubarb and aloes, by which iniquity ſhall be purged. 2. The judgment of *corruption* humbleth, and layeth us low; ſo that we may become the habitation, where the Lord will dwell. And is not this matter of a ſong? and it ſends us many errands to the throne of grace. 3. In the judgment of *deſertion* we want not matter of a ſong; for this among other reaſons, becauſe the Lord thereby teacheth us that we cannot ſtand on our own feet; we are like a broken glaſs that cannot ſtand without a ſupport.—When I enjoyed the light of God's countenance, I thought never to be moved; but now he hath hidden his face, and I am troubled: and yet it is matter of a ſong; and that becauſe this long deſertion is but making way for a new manifeſtation, where we ſhall get a *new ſong put in our mouth*, Pſalm 40th, where David was ſhewing how he was *in the depths, where there was no ſtanding*; but what follows? *He ſet my feet upon a rock, and put a new ſong in my mouth, even praiſes to our God.*

This week our miniſter had a faſt-day; and he preached on Pſalm cxliv. 5. *Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down; touch the mountains, and they ſhall ſmoke.* He obſerved, that there were mountains of Bether between the Lord and his people: but if he would touch them, they would ſmoke or flee away. This was very refreſhing to me; for I was at this time greatly deſerted.—The Sabbath-day following, the ſacrament was to be diſpenſed in Mr. M'Cara's congregation, where I reſolved to attend. When I came to the place, O how ſweet and refreſhing were the ſermons on Saturday to me? Mr. Moir diſcourſed upon Gal. iii. 1. *Before*

whoſe eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth, crucified among you. The whole of it was ſweet to me: but when he came to the application, he gave us ſome marks of trial; and in the mean time my heart could have ſealed the truth of the evidences he condeſcended upon: he ſpoke of the very language of my heart; and I wanted not ſome meaſure of joy in hearing this ſermon. I thought he ſpoke directly to my caſe; and I got a new confirmation of my adoption.

Mr. Cock was on Phil. iv. 19. *But my God ſhall ſupply all your needs, according to his riches in glory, by Chriſt Jeſus.* O but this was a ſweet ſermon to me; for I ſaw in glorious Chriſt that which could ſupply all my wants. Am I ignorant? he is a Prophet: am I guilty? he is a Prieſt: have I enemies? he is a King. What though the devil tempt me to miſbelief, I can anſwer him with the promiſes: what though I meet with afflictions; a crown of glory will make up for all. Yea, all things are in glorious Chriſt that I want.—This was a very comfortable night to me; and theſe words haunted my mind, *Sanctify yourſelves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders amongſt you.*

Mr. M'Cara had his action-ſermon in Deut. xxx. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing: therefore chooſe life that both thee and thy ſeed may live.*—He called all things in heaven, and all things in the earth to witneſs againſt us, if we would not accept of Chriſt. I thought there was a remarkable power came along with the words, making me willing to conſent to this bleſſed bargain. In which place I took to witneſs the heavens and the earth, that it was a ſealed bargain betwixt Chriſt and me; for I was made willing with the offer.—After that I had conſented to this bleſſed bargain deliberately, I went to get it ſealed at the table of the Lord. My petitions at the table were theſe, "That the Lord would continue his goſpel in Scotland for ever; and that he would continue the

goſpel in that congregation; for, at this time, there were great ſurmiſes of Mr. M'Cara's leaving them, which was great ſorrow to me then, and ſtill more ſo when it actually took place, as it really did a ſhort time after this." My third petition was, "That the Lord would open the hearts of ſinners in that congregation to conſent to glorious Chriſt, ſo freely offered to them in the goſpel." There were alſo ſome petitions put up for myſelf; particularly, That he would keep me from all ſin.—"I here this day promiſe, as in thy ſight, O Lord, to ſtand to thy intereſt though perſecution ſhould ariſe, and to lay down my life, if thou calleſt for it. Come, Lord, tie both me and my reſolutions faſt to thyſelf, that I ſlide not back in trying times."—O but this was a comfortable day to me, wherein my intereſt in Chriſt was as viſible to me as if it had been written in golden letters before mine eyes. It is impoſſible for the tongue of men and angels to declare the joy and comfort I experienced, when I thus gave myſelf to the Lord: and, in teſtimony whereof, I take myſelf to witneſs, and all in heaven and earth, that I am not my own, but the Lord's. Written and ſubſcribed at Bruntſhields, the fourth Sabbath of July, 1757. MARION LAIRD.

As to my requeſt about Mr. M'Cara's leaving the place, I thought I was anſwered thus, *What ye know not now, ye ſhall know hereafter.* And there came ſuch a ſweet power along with the words, which made me to ſay, *Lord, it is enough.*—And as for my requeſt to be keeped from apoſtacy, I was anſwered, *My grace is ſufficient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in thy weakneſs.*

On the back of this ſolemnity I was much affected with the ſenſe of judgments, both preſent, and what I feared was coming. At this time we were threatened with both ſword and famine. When I thought on his righteous judgments, my heart trembled within me. O how often did I ſupplicate the throne of grace, that

the Lord would give ſtrength according to the day of trial; for I was afraid that trying days were a-coming. Yet there are two things I was apprehenſive might be our judgment. I could not conſent to the firſt, namely the Lord's leaving the land, and taking the precious goſpel from us, and the goſpel miniſter's, making us again a habitation of idolatry.—Another thing I could not conſent to, the want of the Lord's preſence in the furnace; for his preſence will make even the furnace ſweet: I would willingly yield to any trial, whatever he would ſee fit to tryſt us with, if ſo be it were to purge away our ſins, and make us more holy: but to ſubmit to the taking away the goſpel from Scotland, that I would never do; no, my heart would never comply with that. I find that in the goſpel which anſwers all caſes. Then I was diſpoſed to ſay, "O Lord, for thy glorious name's ſake, remember this ſinful church and nation; and when thou comeſt with thy ſore judgments, let them be for purging and purifying both miniſters and people, that they may come out of the furnace all glorious, that other nations may ſee thou loveſt to dwell in this covenanted Scotland.—Now, Lord, for Chriſt's ſake, when thou in wrath viſiteſt this land, and altho' I ſhould fall in the common calamity, yet let my ſoul be united to thee in peace. O do not ſuffer me to flinch from the leaſt article of thy truth. Let not my ſelf-ends get more room in my heart than thy glory. But, O Lord, if it were for thy glory to hide me in the grave, before thou come out of thy place, to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities; yet, *Not my will be done but thy holy will.*—Now, O God, ſeeing there is ſuch a vehement deſire in my heart to be with Chriſt, O when wilt thou bring me to the full enjoyment of his glorious preſence within the vail, where no intervening cloud would ever cover me from his bleſſed face again; and where I may be free from ſinning, free from a wicked heart, and free from a tempting devil

PERIOD NINTH.

This period gives us an account of her being viſited with bodily trouble; her reſignation to the will of God therein, though impreſſed with the views of its being lengthened out: together with the reaſons, why ſhe ſo often deſired to be diſembodied, and get home to her Father's houſe; and the agreeable entertainment ſhe met from the Lord both in public and private.

EVER ſince I can rightly remember, it hath been my kind Lord's way with me, often-times to hedge up my way with thorns of affliction; by this he has made me to eſcape ſome of the pollutions of the world: yet he has puniſhed me leſs than my iniquities deſerve. However, under theſe afflictions, the Lord hath been very kind to my ſoul, in manifeſting his glory to me; whereby I have ſeen more of the vanity of the world than ever I ſaw by affliction: he has given me ſometimes ſuch a view of his glory, as darkened the glory of all created objects; and by which I got above the clouds of darkneſs and unbelief now and then: and glad would I have been never to have come down to the world again.

About the middle of Auguſt 1757, it pleaſed the Lord to viſit me with afflictions on my body.—O what am I, that he ſhould be ſo condeſcending to me, as to warn me of afflictions before they came upon me!—He bore in upon my mind theſe words, Amos iv. 12. *Becauſe I will do thus unto thee: prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* And Exod. xix. 5. *Be ye ready againſt the third day.*—The Lord, by his grace, enabled me to put the whole of this work back into his own hand; that he would ſanctify and prepare me for what he had in mind to do with me. O what divine majeſty I ſaw

in reading this 19th chapter of Exodus! O what of his love ſhined to me in other parts of the inſpired and bleſſed word! A ſweeter time than this I never enjoyed: for I ſaw that in the holy ſcriptures which I never ſaw before. O Sirs, but a believing view of the ſoul's meeting with its Redeemer, and receiving a crown of glory from him at laſt, is an excellent ſupport under the heavieſt affliction. Faith repreſents Chriſt as ſtanding by the furnace as a refiner, where his gold is melting, carefully overſeeing the trials of his people, that they may work for their good, and ready to bring them out thereof when they are ſufficiently purified from their droſs.

At this time, however, I was greatly in the dark about the language of the rod. I often begged of God, that *he would ſhew me wherefore he contended with me*; and if there be any ſecret ſin I know not, he would ſhew it unto me. — It is exceedingly diſtreſſing to be under a ſilent rod. The Chriſtians of old have taken much pains to know the voice of the rods that they met with; as is clear from 2 Sam. xxi. 1. and Job vii. 20. Yet it is not every man, nor every woman, that can take up what the rod ſpeaks; it is only the perſon who is endowed with much heavenly wiſdom from God.

One day when I was meditating on the voice and language of the rod, it came into my mind, that this rod may be for the trial and exerciſe of my faith: for I remember, when my kind Lord was pleaſed to bring me into the chambers of his preſence, and made me give myſelf away to him; then I thought, thro' the ſtrength of the Lord's grace, I would be content with croſs and loſs, with any trial he pleaſed.—But this I greatly deſired, that he would keep my intereſt in himſelf clear to me, and alſo keep me about his own hand. "O Lord, if thou giveſt me riches in this world, give "me a heart to diſpoſe of them for thy glory; and if "poverty be for thy glory, O make me content with

"it, or any thing thou pleaſeſt."——I have heard of one who ſaid, He is an unworthy wretch that cannot be content with God in Chriſt, with the want of all other things. But, ah! how ungrateful have I been to him! I have been a backſlider in heart; yet, O what hath he done for my ſoul! and how many ſignal tokens of his love hath he beſtowed on unworthy me, which many of his own dear children did not experience, at leaſt, in ſuch a meaſure? Job v. 15. *Happy is the man whom God correcteth.* I dare ſay, that afflictions have been no ſmall mercy to me: the Lord has often hedged in my way, from ſin, with the rod; yet notwithſtanding the Lord's goodneſs to me, when he laid his afflicting hand on me, I had a new conflict to fight with Satan, and my own predominants. I could not get my will brought to ſubmit to God's will. My great conflict was, theſe twelve years bygone, in my afflictions, to get my heart brought the length to be chearfully content and ſubmiſſive to God's will, when he turned me back again into the wilderneſs.

Here I will give ſome account of the reaſons whereupon my deſires to die were founded.

1. I was as one impatient till I be above, at *uninterrupted fellowſhip* and *communion with glorious Chriſt.* I will never be at reſt, enjoy what I will, until I get Chriſt; until I obtain theſe endearing and immediate embracements of that noble Plant of Renown, the flower of the ſtock of Jeſſe, who is the light of the higher houſe.—It hath pleaſed the Lord to give poor unworthy me ſuch lively diſcoveries of the love of God in Chriſt, that I longed to be altogether with him, where there would be no more parting again.

2. I deſire to be *avenged on my enemies, indwelling ſin.* O that the Lord may enable me to carry the blood of Chriſt continually along with me, in the hand of faith, eſpecially in the day of battle; for the enemy flies at the ſight of it; *And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb,* Rev. xii. 11.——O how ſweet has theſe

words been to me, *Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: Theſe enemies whom ye ſee to-day, ye ſhall ſee no more!* I longed much for the *victory over Satan*, and a *deceitful heart*.

3. I deſired to die, becauſe I was ſo *uſeleſs for honouring God in the world*, where he is ſo much diſhonoured by all ranks and denominations.

4. I deſired to die, becauſe I was afraid of *falling in time of trial*. I was very much aſſaulted this way: but my great relief was that which has been my life, viz. the promiſe, 1 Cor. x. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* It is not, what I have, that makes me promiſe, or expect through-bearing; but what is in Chriſt, and the promiſe.

At this time, however, I was very timerous to meet with death: I thought many are the trials the Lord hath brought me through; but death is a trial I have no experience of.—O that I could praiſe the Lord for his aſtoniſhing love and condeſcendency to me at this time, although a night of ſore affliction on my body. O how ſweetly did the Lord ſhine on theſe words to me, *Take this rod in thine hand, therewith thou ſhalt do ſigns*; namely, the rod of the promiſe in the hand of faith; with Pſalm xviii. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs!* O the aſtoniſhing ſovereignty of the grace of God! By the Spirit of God ſhining on theſe words, I thought that death was no more to me but to throw myſelf into the arms of glorious Chriſt. I was indeed once as much afraid of death as any, when I ſtood trembling under the terrors of God's law: but, in the mercy of God, and by the power of his grace, I was made compoſedly, and with joy, to look death in the face. I now dare to look it in the face, in its moſt ghaſtly ſhapes, and hope to have the victory through Chriſt

I really longed for it. O for the grace of patience to wait for his coming.

It pleaſed the Lord to recover me a little out of this affliction: but theſe words very much haunted my mind, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple; even the meſſenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. I will come again, and receive you unto myſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo,* John xiv. 3. *Reſt in the Lord, and patiently wait for him; do not fret.* I truly thought this was the voice of God to me: for, although I dare not repine at his afflicting hand; I longed exceedingly to be with the Lord. I deſire to believe, that there is not a grain weight of affliction in my cup which infinite wiſdom doth not think fit ſhould be there. And I firmly believe, and deſire to reſt upon this, that infinite wiſdom and infinite love, was at the mixing of the cup: and his tender heart will carve no more out to me than what he enables me to bear. O it is comfortable that Chriſt hath gone to heaven by the way of the croſs; that his bleſſed feet hath trodden that way; and that his precious lips hath drunk of that cup. That has been a ſweet word to me many a time, *In all your afflictions, I am afflicted.* Well may I ſay, *Behold what manner of love is this,* to ſuch an unworthy creature.

On October 23d, 1757, Mr. Cock preached on Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd; againſt the Man that is my Fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*— This day he was on the application; and he exhorted believers to devote themſelves away to the Lord, and all that they had to him, who had expoſed his breaſt as a living ſhield to the ſword of juſtice for them: and he alſo exhorted us to prepare for ſufferings. He ſaid, "Some of you may live to ſee ſuffering days for the "truths of Chriſt." At hearing of this, I was afraid that I would flinch from the truth when a trying time would come. Then theſe ſcriptures were made ſweet and comfortable to me: *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in*

the power of his might: and he ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light. Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldeſt believe, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God.—This was a ſweet night to me: after I came from the ordinances, I went to a ſecret place, where I again made a new reſignation of myſelf to the Lord's ſervice, to do and ſuffer whatever he pleaſed, and ſhould call me to, on condition he give me ſtrength to do it. I deny all ſtrength of mine own to do any thing that is good. Daily experience hath taught me the truth of this: "Therefore, O Lord, I again and again give up myſelf to thee, in a ſacrifice to thee this night; and, in teſtimony hereof, I have thought it, I have ſpoken it in prayer, and now I have written it."

The 30th of November, 1757, I ſet apart for faſting and prayer. At this time I was affected with the ſenſe of judgments, both preſent, and what I feared was a-coming. It was reported, that the French were coming on us.——At this time we had the Highland-watch lying in our place, whereby the town was greatly defiled, by their abominations, and the holy name of God dreadfully blaſphemed: and many were the indignities that was done to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—At this time there were few making conſcience of putting honour upon the Lord by witneſſing for his cauſe and teſtimony. We are all obliged, by the oath of God, to own it and cleave to it, although many at this day are aſhamed to own theſe vows. But, alas! who can think upon our ſad deplorable condition, and not have their eyes affecting their hearts, and wiſhing that their head were waters, and their eyes fountains of tears, to weep day and night, if it were poſſible, with tears of blood, for our great and grievous defections, backſlidings, and apoſtacies from God, and from a pure covenanted-work of reformation? No nation in the world hath ſo far changed their glory, for their ſhame.—For theſe, and many other abominations, I deſire to be humbled this day before the Lord.

PERIOD TENTH.

This period preſents us with the commencement of the ſore trouble ſhe was ſeized with, which laſted ſeveral years, and at laſt iſſued in her diſſolution: together with the preſages ſhe had of its approach, and the certain grounds that it was to be a lengthened-out rod; with her exerciſe under it, for the firſt nine years thereof.

IT pleaſed the Lord, in the month of December 1757, to bind me with the cords of affliction: my body was ſore pained with ſtitches, as if ſo many darts had been ſtuck in it, and left there; and all the means uſed for my relief, rather increaſed than alleviated my pain. All phyſicians were of no avail to me. My will was very ſubmiſſive to the will of God for ſome time, till I met with ſeveral diſappointments; then I thought I was like the children of Iſrael, who were brought unto the borders of Canaan, and for their ſin were turned back into the wilderneſs again. Then I went to the Lord by prayer, to aſk his mind concerning the rod, or if it was preſent death. The glorious hearer of prayer anſwered me with theſe words, *It is not for you to know the times and the ſeaſons which the Father hath kept in his own hand. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promiſes*, Heb. x. 36. *The viſion is for an appointed time*, Hab. ii. 3. From theſe words I ſaw my trouble was to be lengthened out: then unbelief took occaſion from theſe words, *A thouſand years are with the Lord as one day*. O how hard a matter did I find it to learn to be content? it was to me like the cutting off a right hand, or the plucking out a right eye: It was ſo croſs to my nature, that I think I might fitly compare my heart to a pot, when the fire is ſet to it, which makes

the ſcum to appear that was not ſeen before: when the fire of affliction was kindled, it made much of the ſcum of diſcontentment to appear; the ſcum of ſelf, and the ſcum of pride.—O how did my proud heart riſe again, in *deſpiſing the chaſtening of the Lord?* But glory to him, *he dealt not with me as I ſinned, nor did requite my ill.* When my trouble was moſt ſevere, he gave me many a broad ſight of the promiſed land, and ſome foretaſtes of the fruit that groweth upon the tree of life. At ſome other times, he withheld the immediate ſhining upon his word, on which he hath cauſed me to hope; then I found my ſoul ſhrink at coming out of the body: but judging him faithful, in keeping that which is committed unto him, I reſolved to caſt myſelf over upon him in death and in life. At ſome other times, it pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, and to diſcover the glory of God in the face of Jeſus, which did ſo inflame my ſoul with deſires to be altogether with the Lord, that truly I thought hell would be nothing to have paſſed through, at the neareſt, to have theſe eternal embracements of my Lord within the vail.—O how loth was I to come down again from the mount of communion and fellowſhip with God!

When it pleaſed the Lord to give me a little mitigation of my trouble, he vailed his glory again: and then I muſt enter the liſts with my ſpiritual enemies. O the diſcontentment of my heart, ſupported by pride and ſelf. I thought my heart was a very den of devils. That word ſometimes ran in my mind, *Let it ſuffice you that the houſe of David wax ſtronger and ſtronger, and the houſe of Saul weaker and weaker.* O how could I believe, that grace, like the houſe of David, was growing ſtronger; and ſin, like the houſe of Saul, growing weaker, while I had a heart ſo full of diſcontentment, oppoſing the holy will of God? I often conſulted with ſenſe and reaſon: then I concluded that there is no more appearance of an out-gate from my trouble, than the firſt day of it. I was then in

great danger of fainting under the chaſtening of the Lord.

One day my heart was raging diſcontentedly againſt God, and I ſaid, *I do well to be angry:* but immediately that word came, *I will ſharply reprove thee;* and with it ſuch a ſenſe of God's wrath was poured into my ſoul, as made me think, that thouſands of years of trouble on the body, could have no proportion to that ſenſe of wrath I felt upon my ſoul. *Who knoweth the power of thy wrath?* I never experienced the like before, nor read of, except in a letter of Mr. Rutherford's, for the ſame ſin of diſcontentment. He ſays, "I bred a plea with Chriſt, for caſting me over the "dyke of the vineyard:" he adds, "my throat was "ſcalded with the ſmoke of hell; and I would have "bought peace again with Chriſt, with a thouſand "years ſuffering in hell."—O that the children of God would be aware of ſpliting on this rock! O that I could love and adore the ſovereignty of God, in ſhortning that ſhock of his wrath, and in giving me a new intimation of pardon in theſe words, Iſa. xxvii. 4. *Fury is not in me; he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, in the ſtrength of battle:* with Ezek. xvi. 63. *I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Here I got leave to ſee by faith, and in the glaſs of the word of God, the love of God, and the wiſdom of God, in laying help upon one that is mighty, to bear that load of wrath, that would have preſſed us to the loweſt hell. I alſo got leave to behold the Son of God ſubſtituting himſelf in the law-room of eleſt ſinners, and God pouring out upon him the fury of his anger, in the ſtrength of battle, till juſtice was ſatisfied in the dear Son of his love; and, in virtue thereof, God ſmelling a ſweet ſavour in this bleſſed ſacrifice, theſe glad news has iſſued forth from his excellent glory, *I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Now, I thought I ſaw theſe words truly verified, *The back*

ſlider in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways: thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee, and thy backſlidings ſhall reprove thee, Jer. ii. 19. I likewiſe ſaw ſin in a brighter light than ever I did before.—Many think it a difficult work to die; but truly I thought it more difficult to live, becauſe of the deceitfulneſs of my own heart. The Lord enabled me to triumph both over the fear of death, and love of life; but not above the fear of ſin: not that I feared ſin, from a fear of hell, nor yet for fear of fatherly chaſtiſement; but becauſe it is that abominable thing which offends a holy God. Sin made me long much for conformity to God.

One day upon the back of this, when I was on meditation, I found a ſtrong deſire in my mind to be back at the pleaſures of the world. I fell a conſidering from whence the deſire aroſe, it being ſo contrary to my ordinary deſires: although I never had any light from the Lord's word, that he would turn me back again into the world, it was a part of my battle to get my will ſubmiſſive to the will of God, whatever way ſeemeth him good: but my greateſt deſire was to be *with Chriſt, which is far better*. While I was conſidering the matter, it pleaſed the Lord to bear in theſe words upon my mind, Matth. iv. 8. *The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and ſheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*. In theſe words the Lord diſcovered to me the ſubtilty of Satan, in alluring my affections, by the glory of the world. It brought into my mind alſo a ſaying of Mr. Welwood's, "This world hath bewitched all the "worldlings out of their wits; and ſome of the ſaints "of God, in a great meaſure."

By this time I was brought very low, and much deprived of converſe with thoſe who had formerly been refreſhful to me, through the Lord's bleſſing. Three ſtranger miniſters came to viſit me; the firſt of them aſked me, What I thought of Chriſt? I told him that I could think but very little about him, conſidering

his worth and matchleſs excellency. He deſired me to commit all that concerned me unto him; *The Father hath committed all things into his hand.*—The ſecond ſpoke on Mark ix. 7. *A bright cloud overſhadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud.* He ſaid, every affliction was a cloud, and every cloud had a voice: and he moreover added, *Hear ye the voice of the rod, and him that hath appointed it.*—The third ſpoke on Luke vi. 48. concerning the man who built his houſe upon a rock; when the floods aroſe, and the ſtorms beat vehemently upon it, it could not be ſhaken, becauſe it was built upon a rock. He alſo ſaid, that death diſcovered the reality of religion in ſome, and hypocriſy in others.—I could ſpeak to none of them, through weakneſs, but the firſt. By this the Lord taught me more and more the emptineſs of all things, beſide himſelf; and weaned me away from all created comforts: for, at this time, if one had come ſuddenly to my bedſide it would have taken my breath away for a little time; and when I eſſayed to ſpeak to them, my pain occaſioned fainting. I was hereby convinced how little I had improved my tongue for God, and the concerns of his glory, when I was in health. Man's tongue is his glory; and therewith he ought to glorify God. In this low condition, I ſaw much of the low condeſcendency of God: he was often pleaſed, by his word and Spirit, to converſe with my ſoul, as a man doth with his friend, when I could be active for nothing but a thought. O how familiar is a God in Chriſt with ſinful duſt! The Lord enabled me to ſome large meditations on theſe words, *Let Chriſt in all things have the pre-eminence.* I ſaw him to have the pre-eminence above all relations.—Compare him with a huſband; he ſaith, *Thy Maker is thy Huſband; the God of the whole earth ſhall he be called.*—Compare him with a brother; he is the bleſſed brother born for adverſity; a *friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother.*—Compare him with ſons; he is the Sun of righteouſneſs,

that *ariſeth with healing under his wings.*—Compare him with ſtars; he is *the bright and morning ſtar.*—Compare him with roſes; he is *the roſe of Sharon:* he is the faireſt roſe in all the garden of God; all other roſes derive their beauty from him: he makes them *comely thro' his comelineſs put upon them.*—I ſaw Chriſt in all things to have the pre-eminence.

After theſe ſweet views of glorious Chriſt, when I got any ſleep, I was ſore diſtreſſed with the enemy. I often dreamed that God was inflicting ſome awful judgment upon me; or that I was committing ſome great ſin againſt God: thereby I was filled with abhorrence at myſelf. I thought the enemy's policy was to fill me with hard thoughts of God. While I was awake, I was allowed to behold God reconciled in Chriſt, and well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake. I was perſwaded he would afflict me no more that what was for his own glory, and my good: but when I was in my ſleep, I was almoſt frighted out of my judgment with theſe fears. However, when I awaked, the Lord compoſed my mind by his word; ſometimes with theſe words, Luke xxii. 31. *Behold Satan hath deſired to ſift you as wheat is ſifted; but I have prayed for thee:* with that word, *The God of peace will bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly.*——One time I was very deſirous that the Lord would rebuke the enemy, and give me a little compoſed ſleep. I was anſwered with Matth. iii. 15. *Suffer it ſo to be; for it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs.* Then I was perſwaded it was my duty to deſire to be kept from ſin in it, more than to be delivered from it, ſince a God of infinite wiſdom ſaw it fit it ſhould be ſuffered.

My exerciſe now, for the moſt part, was meditation; and in it I was made to look back on my former ways: every ſtep thereof filled me with abhorrence. And I thought that motto, *Self, Self,* might be written upon all my religious duties. O to have ſelf dethroned and Chriſt inthroned.—I had no pleaſure in looking

back to this world; but ſo far as I could remember ſomething of God, from ſuch and ſuch a ſermon. And when I remembered his loving-kindneſs, and the enmity of my own heart, my unbelief and ingratitude, eſpecially the ſin of unbelief lay heavy upon my conſcience. When I remembered my younger years, I could believe the love of God no longer than he ſhined on his own word; but razed the foundation, as if God had changed his love, when I was changed in frame. Oh! the many wounds I have given glorious Chriſt by my unbelief. I thought I heard my kind Lord complain, *Ye have broken me with your whoriſh heart; ye have wounded me in the houſe of my friends. Is this thy kindneſs for thy friend?* 2 Sam. xvi. 17. The conſideration of theſe things brought ſighs from my heart, and tears from mine eyes: but the only ground of my confidence before God was, the doing and dying of my Lord Jeſus.

At one time I was ſo far ſhaken, that I could draw no comfort from former promiſes, ſo far as I remember; but, in a very violent manner, was made to act faith on the faithfulneſs of God, engaged in theſe words, *If we confeſs our ſins, God is faithful to forgive us our ſins:* with theſe, *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.*—Glory to God, that it is not ſaid, from *this* and *that* ſin; but from *all* ſin.

After this a very puzzling queſtion aroſe in my mind, from what our Lord ſaid of Mary, *She loved much, becauſe much was forgiven her.* I thought how could that be, that ſo much was forgiven me, and I could love Chriſt ſo little? It was a heavy burden ſometimes, that I could love Chriſt ſo little. I could never ſay with Peter, *Lord, thou who knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee:* but I could appeal to him, *Lord, thou who knoweſt all things, knoweſt I* DESIRE *to love thee.*

One Sabbath-day, when the ſacrament was in the place where I uſed to hear, it came to my remembrance the fair days of the Son of man that I had ſeen, when

the garments of our glorious Bridegroom ſmelled of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia, whereby I was made glad. I found a vehement deſire ariſe in my ſoul to be at the ordinance again, to behold his glory there: and immediately I was ſeized with ſuch a diſcontented diſpoſition, that I could not attain to patience, till the Lord reached me with a conviction of my ſin and folly, from Judges xi. 35. *And Japhet vowed a vow unto the Lord, and he ſaid, I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.* O what a ſermon the Lord preached to me from theſe words! He brought to my mind what had paſſed betwixt him and my ſoul ſeveral years before, which I had no remembrance of. It was impreſſed on my mind, as if the Lord had ſaid, "Do ye not mind the day when I diſcovered to you "my glory, and darkened all created glories to you? "Did ye not then put a blank in my hand, to fill it "up with what was moſt for my own glory? Have I "not granted you what ye aſked me?" My petition then was, that he would keep me about his own hand, and keep my intereſt in himſelf clear to me, under the trial. O with what ſhame and confuſion of face was I filled before a holy God? I might have ſaid with the woman of Samaria, *He told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Chriſt?* I had not only opened my mouth to the Lord, but gone back, and altogether forgotten it.

I aſked one of the family, when they came from the ordinance, where the miniſters had their texts? They anſwered me that ſuch a miniſter preached on Japhet's vow. I ſaid to them, Well, the Lord has preached to me from that ſame text this afternoon. O the wonderful condeſcendence of God, in bringing to my remembrance what I had ſo long forgot; and in giving me a new meal upon theſe old viſits, notwithſtanding my great ingratitude to him. I had often reſolved to be content with the Lord for my portion: this made me often cry unto him, *Thy vows are upon me, O God:* enable me to perform them.

Another difficulty I laboured under was, I knew not the voice of the rod: this made me beg of God, that he would ſearch heart and reins, and diſcover every wicked way in me. It is a ſingular favour from the Lord to know the voice of a rod; yet, he has been pleaſed, in his adorable ſovereignty, to favour ſome of his ſaints with it. When the land of Iſrael was under a famine, David inquired of the Lord concerning the meaning of that rod, and the Lord anſwered him, that it was for *the bloody houſe of Saul*, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Rebecca alſo enquired of the Lord concerning her rod: and the Lord anſwered her, Gen. xxv. 22. I ſaw alſo from the Lord's word, a relation between the ſin and the judgment, Judges i. 7. There is a relation alſo between Adoni-bezek's ſin and his judgment. Alſo Lev. x. 1, 2. They offered ſtrange fire on the altar; therefore fire came from the Lord on them, and they died. But this I could not ſee; therefore it made me cry unto the Lord, *Shew me why thou contendeſt with me.*

At this time I was viſited by a miniſter who ſpoke to this purpoſe; "He told me, the Lord afflicted ſome of his people ſovereignly, as was to be ſeen from his own teſtimony concerning Job, chap. i. 8.; yet the furnace, he obſerved, diſcovered much ſcum in Job, as we might ſee, chap. xxxiv. He alſo ſaid, gold was the pureſt kind of metal; yet the fire diſcovered ſome droſs in it. And he likewiſe added, it was ſo with the pureſt of God's ſaints; the furnace always diſcovered ſome droſs in them." I was made to look upon this as coming from the Lord; for the man knew nothing of my condition. Though I did not ſee a particular cauſe why the Lord afflicted me, yet the furnace made much ſcum to appear that I ſaw not before. Mr. Gray ſaith in a ſermon, "That the rod hath one of three voices to a Chriſtian; the voice of the rod, is either to mortify his predominant idols; to try his predominant graces; or to ſet him on that which is his predo-

minant duty." I was made to conſider a little on the ſecond of theſe; but often I was afraid I had committed ſome ſecret ſin, for which the Lord was contending with me: it ſent me many errands to the throne of grace, till it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer to diſcover his mind, concerning the rod, from his own word, John ix. 3. *And Jeſus ſaid unto them, Neither hath this man ſinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God might be made manifeſt in him.* Then I ſaw the Lord deſigned a manifeſtation of his own work, by the rod. Theſe words were alſo brought to my mind, 1 Pet. i. 7. *The trial of your faith being more precious than that of gold that periſheth; though it be tryed with fire it ſhall be found to the praiſe, honour, and glory at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt.* By this I was perſuaded, that the Lord deſigned the trial of faith, together with a manifeſtation of his own works. But I thought that the honourable part of it, when it is tryed, *It ſhall be found to praiſe, honour, and glory at the appearance of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt;* and concerning which I was glad: but when I thought of its being a *long rod*, and affliction being compared to *fire*, and fire being in its own nature a very trying thing; I began to ſhrink at the thoughts of it: but preſently the Lord ſupported me with the words, *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength made perfect in thy weakneſs*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. Then I was made to believe, that our Lord ſent none awarfare on their own charges: then I thought, no matter how heavy the burden be, if I get ſtrength to bear it; no matter how bitter the cup be, if I get grace to drink it off. This was a ſweet ground for praiſe under all my heavy afflictions: I ſaw the rod in the hand of a loving Father, and made me ſweetly to acquieſce in his infinite wiſdom, and to believe he ſaw it all for my good. This made me often ſay, *The cup which my Father giveth me, ſhall I not drink it?* O that he may enable me to drink it with courage, and to his own glory.—This was the fourth year of my trouble, and the year 1761.

During the continuance of my trouble, I was often viſited by many of the Lord's dear children; ſome of whom, I was no ways acquainted with, when in health, nor ſo much as had ever ſeen, that I knew of. Many of their viſits were very refreſhing to me; and the Lord eminently countenanced them for a bleſſing to my ſoul. —Meditation was now become a delightful exerciſe to me; and ſome of the glorious days I formerly enjoyed, in attending upon the Lord in his ordinances, were very ſupporting to me. Some ſubjects I had formerly heard Mr. Cock upon, were now a new feaſt to me: particularly one very remarkable Sabbath, I remember he preached on Pſalm lvii. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God; be merciful unto me, for my ſoul truſteth in thee.* —This was a very ſweet ſubject to my ſoul. In the forenoon I got a view of the mercy of God, extended through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with application to myſelf. After the ſermon was over, two things induced me to go to a ſecret place for prayer: the one was the ground I ſaw for praiſe; the other was, that the Lord might come forth with and countenance his ſervant in the afternoon, and give him a door of utterance and a door of enterance into the hearts of ſinners: to which I was anſwered, *I will cauſe them that love me to inherit ſubſtance, and I will fill all their treaſures*, Prov. viii. 21. So far as I can remember, I forgot myſelf, there was ſuch a concern laid on my ſpirit for the church in general, with a view of our great backſlidings from the Lord; particularly our great breach of perſonal engagements and vows to the Lord; the breach of our baptiſmal and ſacramental vows; our breach of national covenants which our forefathers ſware to the Lord with uplifted hands, which many are now aſhamed to own: Theſe, and many other things, made me often fear that the Lord would depart from our land. I got leave to lament over them before the Lord, and to pour out my ſoul into his boſom. The Lord was graciouſly pleaſed for a ground

of hope to bear in upon my ſpirit, That he would yet marry ſons and daughters to himſelf in this land, and *rejoice over them as a bridegroom over his bride.*

In the entry of public worſhip in the afternoon, the cxvi. Pſalm was ſung;

I love the Lord, becauſe my voice
And prayers he did hear:
I, while I live, will call on him,
Who bow'd to me his ear, &c.

I thought none had more cauſe to love the Lord than I had, for he had both heard and anſwered my prayer. —O the aſtoniſhing love and condeſcendency of God in what followed! I am afraid, in ſpeaking of ſuch divine myſteries, that I *darken counſels by words without knowledge.* It pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, and to diſcover a glorious Trinity of Perſons, three in one and one in three, ſhining brightly in the perſon of the man Chriſt Jeſus;—in him who is *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* This glorious ſight almoſt ſwallowed me up in wonder; and there was no ſtrength like to remain with me while I beheld it, which made me cry to the Lord for more ſtrength to behold theſe divine myſteries. Theſe divine myſteries had two ſweet effects upon my ſoul: They filled me with a holy awe and dread of God, and fear of ſinning againſt him: and then I was filled with a ſweet and joyful wondering. When I was muſing on theſe divine myſteries, theſe words run in my mind, *Will God in very deed dwell with men?* Behold the tabernacle of God is with men!

Theſe glorious and delightful diſcoveries had ſome impreſſion on my ſpirit till next Sabbath morning. When I awakened out of my ſleep, I found my Beloved was gone. Oh, the ſad change that took place! I thought all the vermine of hell was a-foot: and that hell itſelf could not have bred ſuch a wicked creature as I was in my own ſight. I eſſayed private duties;

but I found the Lord in none of these. Then I said, O to be at the public ordinances again, possibly I will find him there. Mr. Cock preached on the foresaid text; but it was very tasteless to me, for I could not take up God reconciled in Christ. When the sermon was over, I wist not what to do, nor where to find him: it came into my mind that the disciples went to the place where Jesus was wont to resort: then I went to the place where I found him the day before in prayer. I durst not bow a knee before him, his awful Majesty made me afraid, my heart was filled with such vile, abominable, and unbecoming thoughts of God. O how glad would I have been of deliverance from them?—Then came the enemy with his old temptation, but with his hook covered with a new bait on it. He first represents the secrecy of the place, and the water therein, saying, thereby you would put an end to indwelling sin: all former proposals of this temptation I instantly abhorred; but this one was agreeable to my inclination to have an end put to indwelling sin: but ere ever I could well draw a conclusion about it, the Lord seasonably stepped in for my relief with these words, *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* There I got another new proof of the Lord's faithfulness, in not *suffering me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear;* this afforded me a new ground of praise to him for my deliverance.

On another Sabbath morning I was much perplexed with the fears of apostacy; I often feared that one day or other I would fall by the hand of the enemy. While I thought upon the great dishonour that would be done to God thereby; it pleased the Lord to bear in that sweet word, *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*——This Sabbath Mr. Cock preached on these words, *In him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, and in him shall they glory.* He mentioned many seasons that believers were to glory in; such as, temptation, trouble, desertion, *&c.*: these

ſeaſons were very ſweet to my ſoul. And the relation that the Lord ſtood in to me of being my Keeper, exceedingly added thereunto.

The four years before my trouble did far exceed my former years, for much ſweet communion and fellowſhip with the Lord in public ordinances; and I had the happy privilege of attending upon them every Sabbath. I often got the ſecret wickedneſs of my heart laid open, and former experiences confirmed, that I might ſay of a truth, *The watchman found me out.* The matchleſs glory and excellency of our Lord Jeſus alſo often raviſhed my ſoul by his love; yea, pained my ſoul for the want of full poſſeſſion. I longed often to be gone, that I might get to the immediate embracements of Jehovah and the Lamb in the upper ſanctuary.

Mr. Cock delivered ſeveral ſweet ſermons from Rev. xix. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herſelf ready.* He ſpoke of its being a great day upon three acounts? Firſt, he ſaid it is a feſtival-day; *Joy ſhall be in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth.*—Secondly, It is a marriage-day; *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever.*—Thirdly, a coronation-day. He obſerved that in the day of believing, the believer ſet the crown upon king Solomon's head; and it was the day of the gladneſs of his heart, and the day of the gladneſs of the believer's heart: *Behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him.* He alſo ſpoke largely of what ſort of a bride the Lamb got her: and ſaid, "He got her a blind bride, a deaf bride, a naked bride, a polluted bride; and, withal, ſhe was unwilling: Nay, ſhe is, ſo to ſpeak, tied neck and heel to the covenant of works; he got her a divour, and he left her ſo: for ſhe was no ſooner out of arrears to law and juſtice, than ſhe was ſunk deep in arrears to the ſovereign grace of God." He gave a very large and extenſive offer of the worthy and glorious Lamb,

to all within the walls, and without the walls of the houſe: and beſeeched us, all by the joys of heaven and terrors of hell, to match with the glorious and worthy Lamb. I felt a divine power coming along with the offer, by which my ſoul was drawn out to embrace the living Lamb of God, and to acquieſce in him as all my ſalvation, and all my deſire.—My ſoul was filled with a ſweeter ſenſe of the love of God, than it is poſſible for me to expreſs.

It hath pleaſed the Lord, under my trouble, ſometimes to give me a ſweet meal upon theſe, and many other ſweet viſits. It was often impreſſed on my mind, before my trouble commenced, that I had ſome great trial, or death itſelf to meet with. When I conſidered the Lord's way with the ſaints formerly, I was more confirmed of it, that by ſingularly appearing to them, by his love-viſits, he was either preparing them for great duties, or great dangers; and that his deſign thereby was that they might be the better in caſe to perform duty, or to bear up under dangers. And ſometimes he anoints them by the Spirit before-hand, for their being ſuitably prepared for the duty or trial. Sometimes, in the duty of meditation, it pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, whereby I got a diſcovery of the love of God in Chriſt from eternity; and ſaw, as it were, my name written in the Lamb's book of life. O what an enriching portion I ſaw a God in Chriſt to be! I thought they could want nothing that had him for their portion. I ſaw alſo, that let them have what they would, who wanted the bleſſed God, they enjoyed nothing but ſhadows, without the ſubſtance.

Under theſe glorious diſcoveries the Lord often filled my mouth with arguments, and ſaid unto me, *What would ye that I ſhould do unto you?* There came both a heart melting and a humbling power alongſt with it; which laid me in the duſt before him, under a ſenſe of my vileneſs, and want of knowledge what to aſk of him. I often ſaid unto him, "Lord, thou

who taught thy disciples to pray, teach me to ask what is for thy glory." I often opened my mouth to this purpose, "Lord I desire to be content with any trial that thou seest fit to appint me for thy glory." I was very often induced to put up these two requests, "Keep me about thy own hand under the trial; and keep my interest in thyself clear to me."—I must say to his praise he has granted me my request hitherto.

I was often made to believe, that the faith of an interest in our Lord Jesus would be the best support under any trial. I was impressed with the thoughts of a trial from several scriptures, by which I apprehended the Lord called me to prepare to meet him in the rod of affliction: but some of them were very dark, and also wreath-like; particularly Exod. xxxiii. 5. *Put off thy ornaments that I may know what to do unto thee.* Amos iv. 12. *Because I will do thus unto thee; prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*—A little before my trouble began, I could not take a thought about my lawful calling, further than the present day; but my thoughts were hedged in by these words, Exod. xix. 9. *Be ye ready against the third day.* Mal. iii.. 1. *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come.* Those words had such an impression on my mind, that I ordered all my outward concerns, as though I had been instantly to die.

The next day, however, after all this, I found a great aversion in my mind to meet with trouble, from several considerations: in my former trouble, I had my father to sympathize with me; but now he was removed by death. Another reason was, my present circumstances in the world; in regard I had little but what was in the promise: for, in the year 1752, I lost all my worldly substance by the hand of thieves.—Before this time, the Lord taught me, in some measure, a dependance on himself for a covering of his own righteousness to cover my naked soul with: but, till now, I never knew what it was to depend upon him for a covering to my body, and for all I needed

in time and for eternity.—At this time it pleaſed the Lord to bear in thoſe ſweet words, Phil. iv. 19. *My God ſhall ſupply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Chriſt Jeſus.* Theſe words were ſweeter to me than thouſands of gold or ſilver, or any riches the world could afford.

But to return where I was, to my preſent trial. I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of God, I have been in all my ſtraits revived by his word. At this time he ſupported me by theſe words, Exod. xxxiii. 19. *I will make all my goodneſs to paſs before thee.* Gen. xxii. 14. *In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen, the Lord will provide.* O what of his goodneſs has been made to paſs before me, both ſpiritual and temporal! During theſe ſix years of my trouble, [*viz.* ſince 1757.] many a diſplay of his faithfulneſs have I ſeen, in his opening the hearts of his people to ſupply my wants, which hath often ſet me a wondering that any of them took notice of me, ſo vile and unworthy a creature, and leſs than the leaſt of his mercies. While I was meditating, theſe ſweet words came into my mind, *All things are yours, and ye are Chriſt's: You ſhall ſee greater things than theſe,* John i. 50. By thoſe ſtreams I was led to the fountain head, to view the love of God from eternity, and the glorious diſplay of the covenant of redemption; and how that with Chriſt he would freely give us all things. O the height and the depth, the breadth and length of the love of God, it paſſeth knowledge!

But I return where I was. Again, thoſe words ran much in my mind, *Take this rod in thy hand, therewith thou ſhalt do ſigns.* I think it implyed a call in it to take the ſtaff of the promiſe in the hand of faith; and ſure I am, there is much need of the ſtaff of the promiſe in the hand of faith, to walk upon a ſea of troubles.

Having now gotten a clear view of a lengthened-out rod, I was much afraid of ſecurity and ſtupidity under it: this made me often cry to the Lord, that he would

make me ſome how active for his own glory, and not to lie an idle and uſeleſs priſoner.—On the back of this, there was a concern laid on my ſpirit for the church, and for ſome particular perſons, with whom I was acquainted. I got a clear view of their natural ſtate, in Gen. i. 2. *And the earth was without form, and darkneſs was upon the face of the depth: and God ſaid, Let there be light.* Man's underſtanding naturally is a dungeon of darkneſs, and without the image of God. I got much liberty in pleading, that the Spirit of God might move upon their ſouls, and give them *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* I thought I got a ſweet view of that word concerning them, *And it ſhall be ſaid of Zion, this man and that man was born therein.* After this, when I knew them commit ſin, or omit duty, it was matter of exerciſe to me ſome whole nights at the throne of grace. There was little I heard or ſaw for ſome time but it was matter of prayer to me, that God, who ruleth in the kingdom of providence, would diſpoſe all the diſpenſations of providence to his own glory.

It pleaſed God, at this time, to reveal a very dark providence by his word and ſpirit: it brought me into a great ſtrait, from thoſe conſiderations; I was afraid that I was meddling with things too high for me; but I ſtood in awe of thoſe words, *I will deſtroy them, and not build them up, who obſerve not the operations of my hands.* On the other hand, I was afraid of quenching the Spirit; and ſo would have provoked the Lord to withdraw. I ſaw much need of divine wiſdom to guide in the midle path of judgment: I found one party in my ſoul that was for carnal eaſe, and let the matter happen as it would; I found another party in my ſoul that ſaid, that is not the way to glorify God; *Abraham was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God,*—It was matter of many errands to the throne of grace; and the Lord was graciouſly pleaſed to give me new confirmation from his word: and he ſaid, *Will I*

hide from Abraham that which I have a mind to do? But, alas! I could not believe there were ſo many oppoſites in the way of the accompliſhment of the promiſe.

At this time I was viſited by a miniſter; and I thought I would aſk his mind concerning the matter: He made his viſit ſhort, and went about prayer; and in prayer he had theſe words,—"Lord, thou in thy "adorable ſovereignty haſt been pleaſed to reveal the "ſecrets of thy covenant to every believer; but to "ſome believers, thou art pleaſed to reveal the ſecrets "of thy providence."—This was very refreſhing to me. When it pleaſed the Lord to bring the matter to paſs, I got a glorious manifeſtation of the glory of his truth, and alſo of his wiſdom ſhining in the accompliſhment of it, and his wonderful condeſcendency. And theſe words afforded me ſweet ground of meditation, *The works of righteouſneſs is peace; and the effect of righteouſneſs, quietneſs and aſſurance for ever,* Iſa. 32. 17.

Another very remarkable act of God's kindneſs to me, and to the land alſo, ſo far as I can remember, was in the 1760. We were ſuddenly alarmed that the French forces were landed, or near to land. I was often afraid, when I conſidered my own ſin, and the ſins of the land, that the Lord, in his righteous judgment, would make theſe wicked men the rod in his hand to puniſh us for our iniquities. When I conſidered our breach of ſolemn covenants, and the diſpiſing of glorious Chriſt, in the offers of the goſpel; and alſo the profaning of his name by falſe ſwearing, and the profaning of his holy day; together with the aweful diviſions amongſt the godly; for theſe, and many other evils, I was truly afraid, that the Lord would tear and go away. I often thought, Oh! ſhall we be the unhappy generation that will ſin the Lord away from Scotland, where he has had his poſſeſſion for ſo long a time?

Some reckon our Lord was not above fifteen years aſcended, when he ſent the glorious goſpel to Scotland,

by means of perſecution. We are alſo told that Donaldie, a Chriſtian king, eſtabliſhed Chriſtianity by law in the year of our Lord 203, and broke down the bulwarks of Paganiſm. Our Lord hath likewiſe taken infeftment of Scotland ſix times by ſolemn national covenant: and he hath had martyrs in Scotland, aſſerting his kingly office and royal prerogatives at the expence of their blood. But, alas! what matter of lamentation is it, that our Lord is ſo robed of his royal prerogatives in Scotland, whoſe prerogative it is to ſet watchmen upon Zion's walls; and this power put into the hands of profane lords and lairds, and the poor people robed of their right of chuſing their own paſtors! It is alſo for matter of lamentation, that ſo many are ſtrengthening the hands of intruders and hirelings, that have entered the houſe of God.—Inſtead of teſtifying againſt them, few are valient for the truth upon the earth. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? Shall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?* Jer. ix. 6.

I remember, about eight years ago, we were threatened with a bloody ſword. I was much afraid the Lord would ſend the ſword to Scotland to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant. The Lord was pleaſed to give me that view, that he would avert the ſtroke for ſome time, from Prov. vi. 10. *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep.* Oh! I am afraid, all our deliverances are as a ſleep-drink; for we have not returned to *give glory to God, before he cauſe darkneſs.* I am afraid that there is an awakening abiding Scotland, that will arouſe her out of her ſecurity. I think the Lord is ſaying concerning her, as it is in Amos ix. 9. *I will ſift her as corn is ſifted in a ſive. I will bring a third part through the fire: and I will leave in her a poor and an afflicted people, and they ſhall truſt in the name of the Lord,* Zeph. iii. 12. At this time, however, when I heard the French were near to land, the Lord bore in theſe words with life

and power, *I will put a hook in his noſe, and a bridle in his lips, and turn him back by the way which he came,* Iſa. xxxvii. 29. *Thou ſhalt not ſee a people of a deeper ſpeech than thou canſt underſtand,* Iſa. xxxiii. 19. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil that I will bring upon this place,* 2 Kings xxii. 20. From theſe words I got a view that the Lord would avert the judgment, at this time alſo; and that I would never ſee the French, nor ever ſuffer harm by them. Then I was made to plead with the Lord, that he himſelf would turn back our enemies in the way, that inſtruments might not rob him of his glory. And I was informed the wind was the inſtrument the Lord made uſe of to turn back our enemies at this time. O but our Lord is kind to priſoners.—I never got ſo far above the fear of his judgments, as at this time, when I could do nothing for myſelf: neither had I dependance on any other, but the Lord. I enjoyed a ſweet compoſure of ſpirit, when the ſhot of a gun, or the beating of a drum would have ſet others a trembling about me.

Theſe occurrences of providence induced me to make the three following reflections. 1. The reaſon why we were ſo much afraid of man, was becauſe we feared God ſo little; for had we ſtood more in awe of God, we would have been leſs afraid of man: *The fear of man cauſeth a ſnare.* 2. I ſaw that a preſumptuous faith had much need of fair weather; for I ſaw that it left theſe who had it in a ſtorm, when they had moſt need of it. 3. I ſaw that the Lord was much diſpleaſed with us for the ſin of ingratitude to him, from theſe words; *Were there not ten cleanſed? But where is the nine?* Only one returned to give him the glory.

Another very remarkable act of the Lord's loving-kindneſs, and free love vouchſafed to me, was on a communion Saturday, when the family were gone to the ordinance. I was like to be overcome with ſorrow; but I may ſay to the praiſe of the Lord, in all my ſtraits,

I have been *revived by this his word alone.* He brought to my mind, with a very freſh ſenſe of his love, 1 Cor. iii. 23. *All things are yours, and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's. And what can David ſay more?* 2 Sam. viii. 20. I thought I might render it thus, What can David *have* more? or what would *I* have more than a *God in Chriſt*, and *all things* with him? It paſſeth the tongue of men or angels to ſpeak of theſe *all things* that believers have: or tho' one were to write a large volume of them, they might ſay on the matter, as the queen of Sheba ſaid of the wiſdom of Solomon, the *half of it* hath not been told.—They are a field that will ſerve believers to travel in to eternity, and find no end of his treaſures.

I ſhall enumerate a few of theſe *all things* which I ſaw at this time.—I ſaw the *love of God* to be mine from eternity; for, he ſaith, *You hath he choſen in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world was.* I ſaw his love to be mine to eternity; for *he reſts in his love.*—Alſo I ſaw *juſtice ſatisfied* in the Son of God, and love getting a honourable vent through him.—I ſaw him to be the *true tabernacle* where God and man meeteth together.—I ſaw him to be *God's way to us*, and *our way to God*; and the raviſhing glory of God, that ſhined in the face of our Lord Jeſus, filled my ſoul with wonder.—I think the Lord allowed me as large a feaſt all the three days of that ſolemnity as ever I enjoyed at a communion.—I ſeldom longed to be at the ordinances, but I was reproved by theſe, or ſome other words; *Have I been unto thee a barren wilderneſs, or a land of darkneſs?* or, *laked ye any thing?* To which my ſoul was made to reply, "Truth, Lord; I have laked nothing: I have been at no loſs by the want of ordinances." I do not mention this to diſcourage any from attending on the ordinances of God's appointment; for *he delighteth more in the gates of Zion, than in all the dwellings of Jacob.* I only notice it, to ſhew how kind the Lord hath been to a poor unworthy priſoner, who am leſs than the leaſt of his mercies.

One night I had a very ſudden ſhock of trouble: in the meantime three young men came in providentially; I deſired them to go about duty. One of them ſung in the lxxiii. Pſalm, from the 24th verſe; by which the Lord brought to my mind what I once enjoyed at a communion, where I got a very humbling ſight of the love of God, and the enmity of my own heart, which I think is the moſt humbling ſight ever I ſaw: ſuch a ſight is more heart-melting and humbling than although one would live many years at mount Sinai. I was much afraid of ſin, becauſe of a wicked heart within, and a tempting devil and an inſnaring world without. While I was thus perplexed, O how ſweetly did the Lord bear in thoſe words with light and joy, Pſalm xlviii. 14. *That ye may tell it to the generations following: For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.* I ſaw ſuch a fulneſs in theſe words as made me ſay, O the remedy is as broad as the ſore. I ſaw all in them that I needed in time and for eternity. In this night of diſtreſs the Lord brought them back to my mind, with a bright diſplay of his faithfulneſs and ſweet ſenſe of his love; upon which I thought I could have ventured into eternity, depending upon his word.

But before the laſt of the three young men had gone about duty, the accuſer of the Brethren, that ſometimes accuſeth man to God, and God to man, did accuſe God to me, ſaying, in theſe words, *When ye make many prayers he will not hear you.* This ſet me upon examination in the ſight of God and my own conſcience, who were witneſs, firſt, as to the *motives* that induced me to the duty of prayer and praiſe. I was clear that it was the call of God that induced me to it, Pſalm l. 15. *In the day of great trouble ſee that thou call upon me.* This being a time of great trouble, I thought it proper to imploy others to join with me, both in praying to God, and in praiſing of him. Secondly, I was made to examine upon what *grounds* I

desired we should be heard, or accepted. My conscience bore me witness, that it was the *doing* and *dying* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that was the only ground. It is the sweet-smelling sacrifice of our slain Lord that perfumes our persons and duties before God, and makes them ascend with acceptance before his throne.

Satan also suggested, that my sins would rise with me in judgment; and that he would pursue me before the judgment-seat. This filled me with great fear; and the Lord withdrew the sweet sense of his love. I resolved, however, to cast myself over upon him; and if I perished I would perish at Christ's feet, where never one perished. I waited with great fear to hear my sentence come from himself. I thought nothing but a word from his blessed lips, *who speaketh as never man spoke*, would satisfy me. O the astonishing condescendency of God to one of the vilest of sinners! O how sweetly did the Lord bear in those words, Isa. liv. 17. *Every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment will he condemn: This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord:* with Jer. l. 20. *In that day the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found!* Those words were sweeter to my taste than the honey-comb.

One day in August 1763. in the morning, one having asked me how I was supplyed with respect to outward wants. I was very unwilling to answer that question; for I knew not well how to do it, in a consistency with the glory of God. While I was meditating about it, the Lord brought to my mind a singular act of his adorable sovereignty, which was this: one day as I was conversing with a neighbour, when she was going away, she told me that she was going to make ready for her family what I stood in need of, but I had it not. I turned my eyes towards the Lord in faith, that he could open her heart, or the hearts of others, to supply my wants. I must say to the praise

of the Lord, he brought me to himſelf, with all my ſtraits; and often he gave me a new diſplay of that glorious title he hath taken to himſelf, *The hearer of prayer:* and at this time alſo, juſt when I was praying, the very mercy came that I deſired. I was ſet admiring the Lord's loving-kindneſs; and that word afforded me ſweet ground of meditation, *Your Father knoweth ye have need of thoſe things before ye aſk them,* Matth. vi. 8. O but it is ſweet to ſee a mercy come in the accompliſhment of the promiſe, or the anſwer of prayer. If we were helped to obſerve the Lord's ways towards us, we might well ſay, *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?* Through the whole of this day I got near acceſs to God, except when I was interrupted by ſome coming in: he filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me near acceſs to him, as a man doth with his friend.

About the evening he diſplayed more of the divine glory. O the raviſhing glory that ſhined in the face of our Emmanuel, who *is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thouſand;* white in his divinity, ruddy in his humanity; white in his holineſs, ruddy in his ſufferings: *his mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.* In the mean time I found a neceſſity for being changed, and made ſtrong and ſpiritual to bear that weight of glory; and thoſe words ran ſweetly in my mind, *When Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear, he will alſo change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like unto his glorious body.* Soon after this I fevered for ſome days together; but the Lord enabled me to ſomething of a ſweet wondering frame and meditation upon theſe divine myſteries. One day I was worſe than I had been. After prayer, one ſaid, "Amongſt the many great things that God hath done for your ſoul, he will make this work for your good alſo." To this I replied, I am ſhipwrecked back to ſea again; for I would fain have been put into the harbour.

One time when I was thinking upon the grave, and how that the ſweet roſe of Sharon had perfumed it for believers, the enemy ſuddenly ſuggeſted, How do ye know that ye will riſe out of the grave again? The doctrine of the reſurrection being a truth ſo clearly taught in the word of God, I never queſtioned the truth of it: yet ſo far did the temptation prevail, that I had a reluctance at the grave for ſome days, till the Lord ſhined again on theſe words, Iſa. xxvi. 19. *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe.* John vi. 44. *And I will alſo raiſe him up at the laſt day.* The Lord has often told me by experience, that the higheſt attainments will not ſerve in a new difficulty: nothing but new ſupplies from the fountain head could do my turn.

The Lord, who bringeth things new and old out of his treaſures, the other day brought to my mind, a ſingular day in the year 1745. This year, the ſon of a Popiſh Pretender, upon the head of a Popiſh and malignant party, paſſed through part of the land, attempting to get the throne. Glory to God he got not his deſign.—I was ſore afraid, if he got the throne, we would ſoon be deprived of the glorious goſpel. One morning I was much weighted with the caſe of the church: it pleaſed the Lord to bear in theſe words with a very ſweet heart-melting power, Hoſea ii. 15. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs; and ſhe ſhall ſing as in the days of her youth, as in the day when I brought her out from the land of Egypt.* I would have been glad of ſome ſecret part, where I might have poured out my ſoul unto the Lord; for I could not well refrain tears of joy: but my employment at that time obliged me to be in company. Two obſervations from theſe words afforded me ſweet ground of meditation; *And ſhe ſhall ſing there, as in the day I brought her up out of the land of Egypt.* I thought it reſpected the day when the Lord brought them out of the Egypt of a natural ſtate; then the Lord ordinarily brings his

people into a wilderneſs of convictions, and diſtreſſes them leſs or more with a ſpirit of bondage. Some have ſeen God to be a God of terrible majeſty, and all his attributes, as it were, in arms againſt them, when they got a ſight of glorious Chriſt, and God pacified in him, for all that they had done. O what matter of a ſong doth ſuch a ſight afford them! There is little matter what a wilderneſs the Lord may bring me, or the church into, if he afforded us ſuch matter of a ſong.—My ſecond obſervation was from this conſideration; I had then little experience of a Chriſtian life. Some old Chriſtians, whom I converſed with, ſaid, that they had moſt communion with God in the days of their youth. This filled me with reluctance at old age; and made me long for death, that I might enjoy God. But ſurely I ought to have preferred the glory of God, above the enjoyment of him. Whatever reſpect theſe words have to the church, the Lord hath abundantly made them out to me: for he hath afforded me a ſong in the wilderneſs of my affliction, far above the days of my youth. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for carving out ſo gentle a rod for me: he doth all things well.

The view of theſe three particulars, I think, helped to much patience under the rod. 1. To ſee the rod in the hand of a *loving father*. O but this helps much to ſweeten a bitter cup. 2. To know the *Lord's voice* in the rod. 3. To ſee ourſelves *leſs* than the leaſt of his mercies: this helps to a ſong both of mercy and of judgment. The Lord often ſupported me from ſinking by his word: ſometimes by that word, that he would *maintain abundant peace:* and that he would *crown the year moſt liberally with his goodneſs*. That word was often borne in on my mind a little before my trouble, and thro' the time of my trouble, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come, even the Meſſenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Our Lord comes variouſly: he comes ſometimes fatherly, to

correct: ſometimes wiſely, to try: ſometimes ſeaſonably, to comfort and ſupport under the trial. I looked then for his coming to receive me to himſelf, that *where he is, there I may be alſo; that I may behold his glory.* The glorious Redeemer ſaith, *Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me may be with me, that they may behold my glory.*

One time I was compoſedly thinking, O what can be the Lord's deſign in lengthening out ſo long a rod? Immediately I was anſwered with Iſa. lxvi. 5. *Say, Let the Lord be glorified; he will appear to your joy.* It was impreſſed on my mind with a very heart-melting and humbling power, as if the Lord had ſaid, Let me glorify my wiſdom, in ordering your rod: let me glorify my truth, in performing all the good I have promiſed you: let me glorify my power, in upholding you; and *I will appear to your joy.* O aſtoniſhing condeſcendence of the great and eternal Jehovah, to ſay to ſinful duſt, *Let me glorify myſelf in you.* My ſoul was made ſweetly to reply, *Lord, do as thou haſt ſaid:* take glory to thyſelf out of thy priſoner.—That word was much borne in on my mind, Exod. xiv. 13. *Stand ſtill and ſee the ſalvation of God;* with, *he will appear to your joy.* The word *ſalvation* ſometimes ſignifieth a temporal deliverance: but give what the Lord will, nothing leſs will ſatisfy my ſoul than conformity to God, and a complete deliverance from ſin, and the in-being of it. I thought the Lord ſaid unto me, in his adorable ſovereignty, *Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly, according to thy word.

PERIOD ELEVENTH.

This period contains an account of her being conſulted by a young man, relative to an importaut affair; how ſhe was exerciſed concerning it, and what view ſhe got of the matter.

TO ſpeak *to* the Lord, is a very great matter; and to ſpeak *of* the Lord's doings, is alſo a very great matter: *Who is ſufficient for thoſe things? but our ſufficiency is of God.*

On the 26th day of May 1766, I had the opportunity of converſing with a young man: he ſpoke to this purpoſe, "I have been impreſſed to a duty ſome years, "[*viz.* a ſacred office in the Church;] but I know "not whether the impreſſion be from the Lord, or "from Satan:" and he moreover added, "I would "have your advice in that matter." I told him, I could give him none; becauſe the duty is of ſo great importance. I alſo ſaid unto him, that as the Lord ſhall enable me, I will lay the matter before him, who ſays, *Acknowledge me in all thy ways, and I will direct thy paths:* and what light the Lord is pleaſed to give, I will diſcover it unto you: The matter lay very heavy upon my ſpirit that night; and with the burden of it, I went to the Lord by prayer: but was very ſtraitened for ſome time. However, I was made to take encouragement in prayer from that glorious title, *He is the hearer of prayer*, and hath been ſo to me: in many things he hath been both the hearer of prayer, and the anſwerer of prayer. I was made to obſerve, ſo far as I knew any inclination or biaſs in my own heart, to have the matter determinated any other way than the Lord pleaſed, was removed. I was made to plead, that he who knows the hearts of all men would determinate the matter by his word and Spirit.—In anſwer

thereto, at length, the Lord was graciouſly pleaſed to bear in on my ſpirit, Acts ix. 15. *He is a choſen veſſel to bear my name unto the Gentiles;* and Ezek. iii. 1. *Eat the roll, and go ſpeak unto the houſe of Iſrael,* &c. Then I was made to plead with the Lord more boldly, that he would glorify himſelf, in furniſhing the young man with gifts and graces ſuitable to ſuch an office; and that he would make him inſtrumental in glorifying God in the church. And while I was pleading, Jer. xxxi. 3. was ſweetly borne in upon my ſpirit; *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love; therefore with loving-kindneſs will I draw thee.* I alſo got a very ſweet and ſoul-raviſhing view of our glorious High-Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of his being anointed with the oil of joy above his fellows; and of his anointing all the members of his myſtical body: *We have an unction from the holy One, whereby we know all things.* This was a ſweet night to me; and had a ſweet impreſſion for ſome days till I was hearing one read Mr. Erſkine's ſermons, Luke xxi. 31, 32. intitled, *The power and policy of Satan, bound and baffled by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* I began to fear the matter to be a deluſion: if my deceitful heart do not deceive me, I deſire to bring experiences to the bar of God's word, and ordinances of his appointment to be tried. If our experience do not abide the trial of God's word, we have ground to ſuſpect them. Mr. Boſton ſaith, "God's word is always "a friend to the work of the Spirit of God;" and I am perſuaded it is a truth. After examining the matter, I could ſee no warrant from the word of God to prove the matter to be a deluſion; but could not get above the fears of it: the fear always influenced me to prayer; and I may ſpeak it to the praiſe of God, he allowed me near acceſs to himſelf, and often filled my mouth with arguments concerning the young man. However, when I was allowed neareſt acceſs to God, it was often injected into my mind, what if all this be a deluſion. Oh! this diſtreſſed me, and filled me with

abhorrence at myſelf, becauſe of my unbelief, and ingratitude to God: and I was often reproved by one of thoſe three ſcriptures; *O thou of little faith, wherefore doſt thou doubt?* Rom. xiii. 12. *Caſt off the works of darkneſs.* 1 Sam. xv. 29. *The Strength of Iſrael will not lie.* I had ſome thoughts of deſiring the prayers of one of my acquaintances, whom I knew the Lord had been pleaſed ſometimes to favour with his ſecrets: but I was afraid of provoking the Lord to anger by ſeeking further evidences from him. Whilſt I was heſitating about the matter, the Lord was pleaſed graciouſly to breath upon theſe two ſcriptures, Matth. xviii. 19. *And Jeſus ſaid, If two of you agree upon earth, as touching any thing which ye ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done unto you of my Father which is in heaven.* Iſa. xlv. 11. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the holy One of Iſrael, and his Maker, Aſk me of things to come, concerning my ſons, and concerning the works of my hands, command ye me.* This is a very great and wonderful matter, the great God commanding us, ſinful duſt, to *command him.*—O the glory, the majeſty, and condeſcendence of God, that appeared to me in thoſe words, was very great. What can I ſay of it? *Come and ſee* will beſt ſuffice.

The woman whom I had conſulted about this matter, ſaid unto me, that thoſe ſcriptures occurred unto her, with reſpect to the young man, Eccleſ. ix. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* Pſalm xx. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counſel.* Notwithſtanding of all this, I was often at this with it, *Lord help me to believe, for I am an ungrateful wretch.*

One day when I was in my conflict, the Lord taught me ſeveral leſſons: it is long ſince the Lord began to teach me ſome of them.—O I have been an idle ſcholar; I have need to be taught them over and over again.

1. I was made to ſee, that although the Lord would bring home with power upon my heart, all the promiſes of the Bible, ſuitable to that matter I could not believe them.

2. I ſaw more clearly, that faith is the gift of God; and that it is the work of God to believe. I ſaw that without him I could do nothing.

3. I ſaw myſelf to be an ignorant beaſt before God, and that I had not the knowledge of the holy: Our Lord ſaith, *My ſheep know my voice, and a ſtranger will they not follow*, John x. 5. I ſaw the want of knowledge to diſcern the Lord's voice in his word from Satan's, was a part of my diſtreſs: in the mean-time, I thought our Lord ſaid unto me, as he ſaid to Philip, John xiv. 9. *Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip?* I thought it was as if the Lord had ſaid unto me, "Have I not given "you many a manifeſtation of my glory, and many an "intimation of my love, and what a ſhame is it, you "have not known me, Philip?" O the heart-melting and heart-affecting power that came along with theſe words! His loving-kindneſs was like to overcome me. —The views of my ignorance and ingratitude to him, brought ſighs from my heart, and tears from my eyes.

4. I was made to ſee, and alſo to conſider, if I had attained to as much ſtability in other matters, as the Lord has helped me to about my own ſalvation, I would forget to ſympathize with others, that are toſſed with doubts and fears as I am.

At another time I was eſſaying prayer, and was pleading the out-making of the promiſe with reſpect to the young man; but with a great battle and ſtruggle I wan to ſay, *Lord, do as thou haſt ſaid.*—When I was thus employed, it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer to ſhine, by his Spirit, upon theſe ſcriptures; Acts ix. 15. with Jer. xxxi. 3. xxxiii. 14. *I will take them one of a city, and two of a family*, Iſa. lvi. 7. It pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, and to give me ſuch a glimpſe of his glory, as made all doubts and fears to diſappear, before the brightneſs of that light. O the bright and raviſhing view I got of that everlaſting love of God; *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love*;

therefore with loving-kindneſs will I draw thee. *I* the glorious and eternal Jehovah is the lover; O happy man, happy woman, that is beloved by him: *Happy is that people, whoſe God is the Lord.* The raviſhing views of that love enflamed my heart with love to God, and to the object beloved by him. I think, when the Lord in his adorable ſovereignty is pleaſed to give a view of his love, or intimation of his mind with reſpect to another; the one that is privileged with it, at that time, cannot but taſte of the ſweetneſs of that love. I think it is a part of that holy and ſweet pleaſure that is to be found in Wiſdom's ways; *Wiſdom's ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace,* Prov. iii. 17. I never all my life got ſuch a bright view of the attribute of divine love: *God is love; he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16.——This was a day I ought to remember with thankſgiving, being July 9th, 1766.

When I ſpoke of the matter to the young man, it was with ſome meaſure of fear, ariſing from the conſideration of that holy and reverential fear that is due unto the Lord, either in ſpeaking of him, or ſpeaking to him. I was alſo afraid, leaſt there ſhould be any miſtake in the matter, whereby the Lord would be diſhonoured. And perceiving him very glad, I was afraid of ſelf-confidence in him, or vain-glory: but his words gave no evidence of it; thereupon thoſe words were ſweetly borne in upon me, *Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord,* Pſalm cxxxviii. 5. *Thou meeteſt him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteouſneſs, thoſe that remember thee in thy ways,* Iſa. lxiv. 5.

After the young man went from me, I was eſſaying to plead for a bleſſing upon our conference: ſpiritual conference is a duty; to my ſweet experience, I have often found it pleaſant. The Lord breathed upon, and gave countenance to it, as he did to the diſciples, Luke xxiv. 15. But whilſt I was thus employed, two ſcrip-

tures were darted into my mind, whereby I was ſore wounded, and wiſt not what to do, for they were contrary to all the former. I thought before I would draw a concluſion about them, I would look to the Lord for his direction: and while I looked to the Lord for his direction, thoſe two ſcriptures came, *Be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Your adverſary the devil, walketh about as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. v. 8. By theſe two it was very evident to me, that the former was from Satan; they had very different effects. 1. The word that came from the Lord, lead to the Lord. 2. Light accompanied the word; *The enterance of thy word gives light*, &c. 3. It filled the ſoul with a ſweet compoſure, and excited to duty. —The native tendency of the other was to drive away from the Lord; and to fill the ſoul with horror, darkneſs, and confuſion.

One night I could get no reſt; ſleep went from me, ſuch a concern was laid upon my ſpirit for the young man's eternal ſalvation. I eſſayed prayer again and again, till that word came, Mark ix. 19. *Bring him unto me.* Then I was made to plead that abſolute promiſe, and to ſay, 'Lord, I cannot bring him unto 'thee; but thou haſt ſaid, *When I am lifted up, I will* 'draw all men after me. Put him amongſt ſome of 'thoſe *all men* thou wilt draw after thee: thou art a 'Prince exalted at the Father's right-hand, to give re'pentance and remiſſion of ſins:' and whilſt I was pleading, that other word came, which was very ſweet and confirming to me; *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in righteouſneſs, in judgment, and in loving-kindneſs; and thou ſhalt know the Lord*, Hoſea ii. 19, 20.

I remember, about five years ago, when it pleaſed the Lord to intimate to me, that I was to have a long rod of affliction, I was afraid of ſecurity and ſtupidity, which made me cry, 'O Lord, glorify thyſelf in a

'uſeleſs priſoner, and enable me to glorify him upon 'the earth.' I may obſerve it to his praiſe, he wonderfully diſappointed my fears; by often giving me a burden of affliction upon my body, or a burden of concern upon my ſpirit; and very often part of both: the burden of others often became my burden; and the great motive that induced me to it, was the glory of God: that God may be glorified in over-ruling their difficulties to his own glory and their good. — I have ground to obſerve it alſo, to his praiſe and glory, that when the Lord allowed me near acceſs to himſelf for others, I never wanted for myſelf. *Theſe are parts of his ways; and how ſmall a portion do I know of him?*

GREENOCK, Auguſt 4th, 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

CONCLUSION.

The Concluſion of the MEMOIRES, *containing Reflections on the foregoing Exerciſe.*

FROM the beginning of April 1740, to the time of my outgate, ſo near as I can remember, was about the month of July, 1741. And upon the whole, I ſhall make the following reflections.

SECT. I. *Some general Obſervations.*

1. I HAVE often reflected with wonder at the *ſovereign free grace* and *love of God*; which is neither procured by our good, nor hindered by our evil. At the time when the Lord brought me to hear the glorious goſpel, which he bleſſed for my awakening and conviction, I had never come to a greater height in ſinning, and drinking in youthful pleaſures. The Lord ſet home the law, in its ſpiritual extent; he led

me into the dark receſſes of the heart, to ſee what abominations were done there in the chambers of imagery. I ſtood amazed at the ſight; and was made to wonder, that ſuch a wretch as I was ſo long out of hell. This could not be but a ſurprizing ſight to one who had an high opinion of herſelf. — A little before this, I thought if three would go to heaven, I would be one of them; though verily I ſought righteouſneſs by the works of the law, by which no ſinner can be juſtified.

2. I have wondered at the infinite *power* and *wiſdom of God*, that bore me up under ſuch a load of guilt and ſenſe of wrath; and yet ſuffered me neither to ſink under it, nor ſplit on the Rock of deſpair. You may read my caſe in Deut. xxviii. 65, 66, 67. I had no aſſurance of my life a moment being out of hell.

3. I wondered at the *divine patience*, bearing ſo long with me; and at the *wiſdom of God*, in keeping me ſo long at Sinai. I ſee that leſs of the law-work would not do: my proud heart thought it below it to come down from the tree of legality, and to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification before God, and acceptance with him. I found *ſelf* was the ſticking point with me: that a hard ſaying, *Let a man deny himſelf*. To be denied to religious ſelf was like the cutting off a right hand, or the plucking out a right eye. The Lord continued thundering from mount Sinai, until he made me deſpair of hope by the works of the law: *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life; he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*, John iii. 36. Then Chriſt was manifeſted in the character of a *Redeemer*. O how ſweet was this relation, a Redeemer! *He was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law*. Whilſt this glorious diſcovery laſted, it was full of raviſhing ſweetneſs: many things contributed to

make it ſo; particularly the caſe wherein it found me condemned by God, and by my own conſcience. I was like to ſink under the fear and preſſure of a preſent execution of the ſentence. Was it any wonder that the news of pardon and forgiveneſs was ſweet to one in ſuch a caſe? I mention not theſe things for my own commendation; but to the praiſe and glory of his grace, who hath made us *accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6.

SECT. II. *Containing an account of my experience about the duty of writting.*

AFTER the forementioned exerciſe, I wrote a few remarks, intending only the help of my own memory.—About that time my father took trouble, which iſſued in his death, which was the occaſion of my going afterwards to ſervice.—I would here, by the way, obſerve a few conſiderations, that lay heavy upon me about the time of my father's death. It was not only the want of him, though a loving and affectionate father, but the loſe which the family would ſuſtain. The laſt time I ſpoke with him I aſked him how matters were with him? He anſwered me, 'I get ſome 'blinks of the Lord's countenance; but when he 'comes, he ſtays ſhort till he is away again.' A few days thereafter he went to the undiſturbed reſt of glory, where clouds would no more cover from the face of our glorious Lord. When I conſidered the great loſs the poor family was at, by the want of him; there being nothing like grace in any of them; when I conſidered, where Chriſt dwells not by his Spirit, they could not dwell in Chriſt by faith; where there is no union to the Lord Jeſus, there can be no communion with him: what is there then but the ſtrong man armed keeping the houſe, and his goods are at eaſe? The conſideration of thoſe things gave me many errands to the throne of grace, crying to the Lord that

he would plant the graces of his Spirit into their ſouls. The glorious hearer of prayer cauſed me to hope upon that word, concerning ſome of them, *I will cauſe you to paſs under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant*, Ezek. xx. 37.

But I return to the purpoſe in hand.—Thoſe copies I had written, I laid into my chiſt. When I was putting on or off my cloaths, and got my eye upon them, I was often challenged by one of thoſe two ſcriptures, *If any man draw back, my ſoul hath no pleaſure in him*, Heb. x. 38. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, If any man putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back, he is not fit for the kingdom of God*, Luke ix. 62. I wiſt not what to do, for I neither had an opportunity for writting, nor had I a deſire for it. I obſerved, in our reading of the ſcriptures, morning and evening in the family, what the word ſpoke to that purpoſe. I ſaw the duty to be founded on, and authorized from many places of ſcripture: I only mention a few of them. *It is a night to be much obſerved to the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord, to be obſerved of all the children of Iſrael, in all their generations*, Exod. xii. 42. How much more ought it to be obſerved unto the Lord, with gratitude and thankfulneſs, by thoſe whom the Lord has brought forth from the Egypt of a natural ſtate, a worſe ſtate than the Egyptian bondage?—*Come, ſee a man which told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* John iv. 29.—*Come here all ye that fear God; and I will tell what he hath done for my ſoul*, Pſalm lxvi. 16.—*For he eſtabliſhed a teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Iſrael, which he commanded our fathers, that they ſhould make them known to their children*, Pſalm lxxviii. 4.—*Whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve thoſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving-kindneſs of the Lord*, Pſalm cvii. 43.——But the great queſtion with me was, *Is it I?* is it *I*, the Lord calls to ſuch a duty? Uzzah's putting his hand to the ark was good in itſelf; but he wanted

God's command to it, 2 Sam. vi. 7. *They offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: and there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord,* Lev. 1, 2.—Thoſe, and the like ſcriptures, filled me with ſo much of the awe and majeſty of God, as made me to tremble at the thoughts of ſuch a duty, without a clear call from him.—The Lord ſaid often unto me, Fear not, I have injoined thee. At other times I was challenged by thoſe words, *The ſervant that knoweth his maſter's will and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* I was reproved alſo by miniſters in their doctrine, tho' they knew nothing of it; for I conſulted with none of them: I conſulted only with God, and the word of God, and my own conſcience; *Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he will direct thy paths,* Prov. iii. 6.

At length the Lord in his holy providence opened a door for that duty, by very trying diſpenſations: they were bitter to me as the gall and wormwood. I ſaid, the Lord had dealt bitterly with me; I was ſo rude and ignorant, and as a beaſt before him.—He cut me off from youthful pleaſures, things lawful in themſelves, but unlawfully uſed, ſo far as they got Chriſt's room in my heart. I ſaw not then what a glorious deſign the Lord was carrying on by thoſe bitter trials; but he hath let me ſee it ſince that time: and I deſire, with all my heart, to bleſs him for them, upon a view of the Lord's way with me. Well may I ſay, *O Lord, who is like unto thee amongſt the gods? who is like to thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders!* Exod. xv. 11. The Lord took me aſide into the wilderneſs, and there he ſpoke with me: he told me in part what he had done for me; and alſo what he would have me do for him. Then he removed the obſtinacy that was in my will againſt the duty; and I ſought further evidences from the Lord, by his word and Spirit, of his calling me to the duty. And I may ſay to his praiſe, he prepared my heart for prayer; and

bowed his ear and anſwered me by thoſe three ſcriptures: I mention them in the order they occured, and the views I got of them; Iſa. xliii. 26. *Put me in remembrance.* I thought it was, as if the Lord had ſaid, Put me in remembrance by telling others what I have done for thee: or cauſe my name to be remembered. *I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations,* Pſalm xlv. 17. *Them that honour me, I will honour,* 1 Sam. ii. 30. This filled me with ſhame and bluſhing in the ſight of a holy God; and made me to ſay, 'Lord, 'what can I do to thy honour? Lord, help me to 'honour thee in life, and in death. Lord, without 'thee I can do nothing: without thee let me deſire to 'do nothing; but through thy grace ſtrengthening 'me I can do all things: I can do all things thou cal-'leſt me to: Lord, *Work it in me both to will, and alſo 'to do, of thy good pleaſure;* and *do thou bear all the 'glory of it,* 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, 'always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch 'as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'*

By theſe three ſcriptures, the Lord fully ſatisfied me as to the clearneſs of his calling me to that exerciſe, and ſtrongly fortified me againſt the trial he knew I had yet to meet with, both from Satan, and from the inſtruments he ſtirred up to oppoſe that exerciſe. *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of this world to confound the wiſe; and God hath choſen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty, that no fleſh might glory in his preſence:* that according as it is written, *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,* 1 Cor. i. 27, 31.

SECT. III. *Containing an account of the temptations I laboured under, while I was employed in the duty of writting, and the way the Lord gave an out-gate therefrom.*

WHAT cometh from the Lord, in a way of love and grace, leadeth to him, in a way of love and duty. By

this exercise I was taught more than ever before, *viz.* a constant treading with heaven: new duties brought in new difficulties, and discovered new wants; and gave me repeated errands to the fountain of infinite fulness, in order to get them supplyed. I am persuaded the Lord sends none awarfare on their own charges. —In a word, the Lord bears all the charges of his own work: blessed be his name.

I neither had education nor natural endowments for such an undertaking. Any memory I had was owing to the Spirit's bringing his own words to remembrance. —When the Lord, by his Spirit, shined upon his word and work, then I had a clear remembrance of both. I have cause to speak it, to the praise of the Lord, it hath often been his way with me, to bring old experiences to remembrance, with new discoveries of himself. Sometimes with brighter views of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ; *The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3.—At other times I got further views of the mystery of justification, and how that question was answered, that would have non-plussed men and angels to have answered it, how God would be just in justifying the ungodly, who saith, *I will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. xxxiv. 7. It is done in a crucified Christ: *He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Upon the ground of his justice-satisfying, law-fulfilling, and law-magnifying righteousness, God is just in justifying the ungodly, in a consistency with all his other attributes and perfections; *Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other*, in the person of the God-man, Emmanuel; God with us. — This way of saving sinners brings in a revenue of praise and glory to God in the highest. O wonderful wisdom; how brightly is it displayed in God's providing so well for his own glory, and the sinner's salvation!

This view endeared the Lord to my ſoul, and made me ſay upon the matter, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do* for thee? But after theſe ſweet manifeſtations of the love of God in Chriſt, ordinarily came my ſoreſt trials. Satan raiſed ſuch a miſt upon theſe truths, I found it a hard thing to win to a ſtedfaſt adherence to them, in the hour and power of darkneſs. Satan injected thoſe, or the like helliſh temptations; Hath God ſaid ſo and ſo? or to call in queſtion the being of ſome attribute or perfection in God; which ſtruck at his very being, and the foundation of religion. It is the ſaying of a divine, "Experience is the mother of af-"fection." By the experience I had of that temptation, I was taught more than ever before to ſympathize with, and pray for, as I could, tho' not as I ſhould, for miniſters who are much in the ſtudy of divine truth, knowing they are men of the like paſſions with ourſelves, and liable to the ſame temptations. I ſaw alſo that it was no wonder though they eaſily parted with truth, if they had a temptation to it, who never felt the power of God, or the ſaving influence of the truths of God upon their own ſouls; nor ever feaſted on the raviſhing ſweetneſs of God, that is to be found in his word. *Thy word was found of me, and I did eat it; and is was to me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart,* Jer. xv. 16.

When I was ſore ſhaken, and faith like to fail, then ordinarily the Lord brought to my rememberance, ſome part of his word, which confirmed me in the truth. I was ſhaken about when the Lord manifeſted himſelf in the promiſe. Then I ſaw matters, in the light of the Lord, to be what they were before; then I was both ſtrengthened and encouraged in the way of the Lord.—I ſaw alſo cauſe to bleſs him for his word, and the teaching of his Spirit; had I wanted them but a little, I would ſoon have been, I thought, as great an athieſt as was upon the earth. Whenever a temptation offered, how eaſily was I ſhaken about the cleareſt

revealed truths in the Bible? *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. I neither learned wiſdom, nor have I the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Such have been the condeſcendency of my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord, as to warn me of onſets from Satan, ſometimes before they came, by thoſe ſcriptures, *And the Lord ſaid, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, Luke xxii. 31.: and, *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand againſt the wiles of the devil*, Eph. vi. 11. It is no eaſy matter to be ſifted by Satan. O bleſſed be God, the Mediator's prayers prevaileth in heaven; *Him the Father heareth always*, &c. Satan often ſuggeſted to me that helliſh temptation, the longer I continued a profeſſion of religion, I would diſhonour God the more. It was ſuddenly darted in upon my mind, as lightning into a room, and with that helliſh force and vigour, as left little ſtrength in me: my hands were ready to hang down, though I never omitted duty upon that account, ſo far as I can remember; but I was much diſcouraged in it. I often feared I would fall one day or other by the hand of the roaring lion of hell, and be a ſcandal to religion.—Satan made uſe of, as a bait for his temptations, the ſaying of the unjuſt judge to the widow, Luke xviii. 5. He moreover ſuggeſted, that by his continually perſevering to tempt, he would weary me out at laſt. Indeed my ſtanding was intirely owing to him *who hath all power in heaven and in earth*, and who can ſet the powers of heaven againſt the powers of hell: *Ye are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

When I was ſore wounded by Satan's fiery darts, then the merciful Samaritan poured in ſome ſweet word of comfort; he bound up my wounds: he ſaid unto me, *Fear not, I am thy exceeding great reward*, Gen. xv. 1. *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. Notwithſtanding, ſo far did thoſe

unbelieving fears prevail, at times, to my ſhame I acknowledge it, and to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, *Who hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6. that I wiſhed for a cottage in the wilderneſs, where no ſaint might know me, that if I fell, I ſhould not *offend the generation of the righteous*. I conſulted with myſelf, how to get off the name of religion: I remembered the common proverb, Such company as ye are, ſuch company take you to. Then ſuch inſinuations as theſe came into my mind, I muſt leave the godly, and aſſociate with the wicked; that I abhorred, for I could appeal to the ſearcher of hearts what a burden the company of the wicked had been to me, eſpecially upon the Lord's day: and as for the ſaints, I counted them for *the excellent ones of the earth*; and favoured them moſt, when the image and Spirit of God moſt appeared in them. I have cauſe to ſpeak it to the praiſe of God, I have found him pleaſed often to breath upon the company of ſaints, both in ſocial worſhip and ſpiritual converſe: *Thoſe that feared the Lord, ſpoke often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name*, Mal. iii. 16.—In this divided day we leave in, I have often thought, it would have been more for the glory of God, and for the promoting of religion, if the ſaints had walked together more friendly in what they are agreed, than what they do: *Iron ſharpeneth iron, ſo a man ſharpeneth the countenance of his friend*, Prov. xxvii. 17. It will never be the privilege of the ſaints, to ſee eye to eye, in all that concerns the glory of God, in this imperfect ſtate: yet they generally agree in the experimental knowledge of religion, tho' they differ far in the gifts and attainments that God is pleaſed to confer upon them. However, the leaſt ſaint has a ſaving knowledge of a God in Chriſt; why then may not the ſaints converſe together about what God hath done for their ſouls? *Follow peace with all men, and*

holineſs: without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord, Heb. xii. 14.

I converſed with a godly miniſter, who had been much in the ſchool of temptation. He told me, that he ſtudied a whole week how he might throw off the name of religion. I was glad to hear of that; for I thought none had been in my caſe, though the apoſtle ſaith, *No temptation hath happened unto you, but ſuch as are common to man.*

In the time of the late war Satan aſſaulted me much by that temptation, It is needleſs for you to write; for the French will come and deſtroy both you and your nation: *The fear of man cauſeth a ſnare;* that I found to my ſad experience. Many things occurred to increaſe my fears: my own and the land's guiltineſs; and the many aweful tokens of the Lord's anger ſmoking againſt us, made me fear the Lord might juſtly make the French a rod in his hand, to puniſh us for our iniquities, and to avenge the quarrel of a broken covenant.—The Lord ſent famine on the land of Iſrael three years, year after year, to avenge the quarrel of a breach of covenant with the Gibionites, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. To my great grief I converſed with one in the character of a miniſter, who ridiculed the covenants. I ſpoke to him to this purpoſe, "If the covenants bind us only to Bible principles, then we are bound by the law of God to perform them; though Scotland had never abjured, by covenant, every doctrine inconſiſtent with the word of God, and our Confeſſions of Faith." He replied, 'It would not be aſked us at the day of judgment, whether we owned a covenanted work of reformation or not.' That ſcripture occurred to my mind, Matth. v. 19. *Whoſoever therefore breaketh one of the leaſt of theſe commandements, and ſhall teach men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of heaven: but whoſoever ſhall do, and teach them, the ſame ſhall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* The noble marquis of Argyle, when upon the ſcaffold, expreſſed himſelf

thus; "God hath laid engagements upon Scotland;
"we are tied by covenant to religion and reformation.
"Thoſe that were then unborn were engaged to it;
"and it paſſeth the power of any under heaven to ab-
"ſolve a man from the oath of God."

One time when I was much ſhaken by the foremen-tioned temptation, I had left my writings lying in a window: that night there came on a great rain, which came down in the window. The firſt thing I ſaw in the morning, was the window in a flood of water: then I ſaid with Job, *That which I greatly feared is come upon me*; for now I thought they were all ruined. When I came to the window, and ſaw the water had made no impreſſion upon them, I was amazed at the condeſcendency of a God of power: he who preſerved the three children, in the midſt of the fiery furnace, preſerved them in the midſt of water.—It was all one to my view as if they had been taken out of a pool of water dry; and I ſaw no natural cauſe for it. O the aſtoniſhing condeſcendency of God, who vouchſafed to work, as it were, a miracle, to confound me for my unbelief. I was aſhamed and confounded, when I remembered the words of the Lord which he had borne in upon my mind, in the hour of temptation; *But upon all the glory ſhall be a defence*, Iſa. iv. 5. *This ſhall be written for the generations to come*, Pſalm. cii. 18.

Again, the ſubtile enemy, who had many times tempted me to deſtroy myſelf, when it ſerved his purpoſe, he turned it another way: he ſuggeſted that *much ſtudying was a wearineſs to the fleſh*, and by it I would deſtroy myſelf. I conſidered, that I had my being from God, my health from him, my all from him, and I deſire to live upon him, and to live to him; and be diſpoſed of by him, and for him, and by his grace at this I deſire to hold, *Thine am I, O David; and on thy ſide, thou ſon of Jeſſe*.

Laſtly, Satan ſuggeſted, that there were ſo much ſelf in what I had written, it were beſt to deſtroy it

for if it came to the light, it would but diſhonour God. While I was grieved at the thoughts of diſhonouring God, thoſe words were borne in upon me, *Thine adverſaries ſhall be found liars;* and, *deſtroy it not, for a bleſſing is in it*, Iſa. lxv. 8.

When I view myſelf in the glaſs of the holy law of God, or in the glaſs of the holineſs of God, who ſays, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*, O what cauſe have I to cry out, *Unclean, unclean!* I need a Saviour to ſave me from my beſt duties, as well as from my worſt ſins. It is a comfortable ſaying of Dr. Owen's, "The Lord "Jeſus takes away from the duties of the ſaints, the "pride, the ſelf, the unbelief; and perfumes them "with the incenſe of his own merits, and preſents "them to his Father: and when they will meet the "ſaints, at the day of judgment, they will ſcarce know "them to be theirs."

Again, I obſerve, ſo far as I know, I neither allowed nor approved of ſelf; ſo far as it prevailed, it was my burden and grief: when my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord was pleaſed to bring me into communion and fellowſhip with himſelf; then that deteſtable idol of ſelf was ready to ſet up its head, and aſpired to rob Chriſt of his crown, and all his royal prerogatives. Could I then be but grieved to ſee my glorious Lord robed of the glory of his grace? I loathed and abhorred myſelf on account of its prevailing; I cried to the Lord againſt it, ſaying, Let King Jeſus reign; let him reign and wear the crown, and poſſeſs the throne in my heart for ever. I had not peace till that deteſtable idol, Self, was diſcernibly got under: I rejoiced ſometimes in hope of the victory over it at laſt, when *thoſe Egyptians, whom we ſee to day, we ſhall ſee no more again for ever*, Exod. xiv. 14.

SECT. IV. *Remarks upon the whole.*

I SHALL now conclude theſe reflections, by offering a few remarks upon the whole.

1. In all my trials and temptations, the ſin of *unbelief* hath been the predominant evil. O how much have I diſhonoured God, by not believing in his word, and not truſting in his ſalvation as I ought? My ſin hath many heinous aggravations attending it, being committed after ſo many ſweet manifeſtations of the love of God in Chriſt, and being convinced of it; again and again have I fooliſhly requitted the Lord, by razing the foundation, and calling in queſtion his former loving kindneſſes; as if God had been changed in love, when I was changed in frame. O what cauſe have I to *look upon him whom I have pierced, and to mourn?*

2. In all my trials, my *comfort* came by the word of God. When he ſhot the arrows of conviction into my conſcience, it was by his word; when he healed me, it was by his word: *The word of God is ſharper than any two-edged ſword; and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. iv. 12. When I got a diſcovery of the glory of God in Chriſt, by faith, it was through the glaſs of the promiſes; when I heard his voice, it was in his word: *Never man ſpoke like this man. He told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Chriſt?* Here we may ſee darkly through the glaſs of the promiſe; but when the glaſs of the promiſe is removed, and faith ſwallowed up in viſion, then the ſoul will get a ſight of its glorious object, the beautiful viſion of God and the Lamb. *Make haſte, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.*

3. The ſweet *manifeſtations* of the love of God in Chriſt, and the *effects* that ordinarily attended them, had their own weight with me in the hour of temptation. I mention ſome of thoſe effects.—They diſcovered new *wants*, and increaſed new *fears* of ſinning againſt ſo loving and kind a Lord.—They diſcovered the want of *love* to God: I wondered I could love him ſo little, who loved wretched me, and *gave himſelf for me.*—

They diſcovered alſo much want of a holy reverential *fear* of God: holy fear in ſpeaking to God, or ſpeaking of him, or writting concerning him: *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the ſaints.*

4. I have obſerved, to my ſweet experience, in the renewed manifeſtations of the glory of God in Chriſt, that I have got a brighter view of *one attribute* and *perfection* of God than of another: ſometimes a bright view of the *truth* and *faithfulneſs* of God; *I will praiſe thy name, for thy loving-kindneſs, and for thy truth,* Pſalm cxxxviii. 2. Sometimes a brighter view of the *love* of God: *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16. Sometimes a brighter view of the *glory* of God, ſhining in face of Jeſus Chriſt: *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* John i. 14. Sometimes a ſenſible *ſmell* of his ointment: *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. His mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good; bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him. That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowſhip with us; and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 John i. 3.

GREENOCK, March 10. 1767. } MARION LAIRD.

The END *of the* MEMOIRES.

A

COLLECTION

OF

Religious LETTERS.

WRITTEN BY

MARION LAIRD.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following RELIGIOUS LETTERS, written by the AUTHOR of the preceding MEMOIRES, to ſeveral of her friends and acquaintances, breath forth much of the ſpirit and diſpoſition of the truly pious and devout Chriſtian.—They were wrote during the time of her laſt indiſpoſition, which laſted more than thirteen years: and as they contain the genuine ſentiments of an exerciſed ſoul, under the rod; ſo, it is hoped, they will be a valuable preſent, and a ſuitable cordial to thoſe who are exerciſed to true godlineſs, eſpecially to all ſuch as may be either in outward diſtreſs of body, or inward perplexity of mind, or perhaps of both.

Though theſe with whom ſhe correſponded, we underſtand, have been very careful in preſerving her excellent Letters; yet, it would not have been in our power to have favoured the public with ſuch a complete Collection of them, had not ſhe herſelf carefully kept doubles of the moſt of them, regularly wrote in a book, and preſerved with her Memoires.

RELIGIOUS LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To MARGARET CLARK, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Siſter in the Lord,

I WOULD diſcover to you, ſome hints for meditation. The firſt thing I would ſay to you is, If a believer's enjoyments come not up that length in degree that formerly he had, he is very ready to ſuſpect them, as if they were all deluſions. If he met with eminent enjoyments in his firſt cloſing with Chriſt, and cannot come up that length again, he calls all in queſtion. Some think that communion with Chriſt conſiſts in elevated ſoul-raptures and raviſhment up to the third heavens; and if they find not this, they think they have no communion with Chriſt: whereas they may have much real communion with him, firſt by deſires after him; ſecondly, by hoping in him; and laſtly, by lifting up their hearts, and panting earneſtly after him, which is real communion, tho' we paſs it as no communion with Chriſt. Often times the moſt real and ſenſible enjoyments have the ſtrongeſt aſſaults on the back of them. — I would only ſay this to you, fight, for the day of your complete victory is coming. No more at preſent, but reſt your loving friend,

GREENOCK, May 7th, 1756. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER II.

To MARGARET CLARK.

Dear and loving Comrade,

DEAR ſiſter, I am glad to hear from you. In this ſhort time ſince I ſaw you I am brought as low as you are; yet it may be you will get home to heaven before me. We ſhould be like the loving wife, that longs and looks for the coming of her beloved huſband. It is the character of believers, that they are ſuch as *love his appearing*. O when ſhall the time of our pilgrimage, and the days of our baniſhment be finiſhed, that we may get home to our Father's houſe, where we ſhall no more groan out our complaints! O that we could ſend our faith and hope, theſe two faithful ſpies, to ſurvey the promiſed land. Dear ſiſter, help me to love and praiſe the Lord Jeſus. — I have heard no preachings ſince ye ſaw me: but Sabbath-days have been very ſweet to me. I am not able to write any more to you. Your loving comrade,

GREENOCK, Oct. 7th, 1757. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER III.

To JAMES GARDNER and MARGARET CLARK.

Dear and loving Friends,

I DESIRE greatly to hear from you. I am in a very weak condition in my body, and unable to write to you; yet, if I could advance God's glory and honour, by commending glorious Chriſt and his love to you, I have occaſion to do it. O what think ye of the electing love of God? What think ye of the free-

dom of his grace? What think ye of the manifeſtations of his love to your ſoul and mine, who am ſo unworthy?—I think I have as wicked a heart as ever any of God's elect had; yet all this could not hold him away from my ſoul. O help me to praiſe him. O admire his love.—You complain of heart-plagues; and ſo may I. I think *ſelf* is the greateſt heart-plague I have. But let us employ the kingly power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to ſubdue them.

Dear ſiſter, you know when travellers, who have met with many ſtorms, troubles, and dangers in their journies, rejoice when they come near to their own country: and ſhould not you and I rejoice when ſickneſs, and fore-runners of death tell us that the winter of our darkneſs and trials is paſſing, and the ſummer of eternal light and joys is at hand? No more at preſent, but reſt your loving friend,

GREENOCK, Oct. 12. 1757. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER IV.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paiſley*.

Dear and loving Couſin,

IT is long ſince I thought to have written to you, but wanted an opportunity. You may think it ſtrange why the Lord keeps me ſo long in the furnace: I know he will keep me no longer in it, than he has glorified himſelf in the trial of faith and patience; and ſerved the purpoſes of his own glory with me. Think not that our Lord is a hard maſter; he ſends none warefare on their own charges: he giveth liberally, according to the ſtate of ſuch a King. Such have been the Lord's kindneſs to my ſoul, that I would rather be in the furnace with him, than in health without him,

Couſin, I can tell you from ſweet experience, the faith of an intereſt in glorious Chriſt, is the beſt water to cool the fire of affliction: there is no matter how bitter the cup be, if the Lord gives courage to drink it; or how heavy the burden be, if the Lord gives ſtrength to bear it. There is a reality in religion that ſupports the ſoul in the agonies of death, and amongſt the hands of the great king of terrors; when all friends, yea, the greateſt of ſaints, can do nothing but bear us company in the houſe of mourning. I intreat you, therefore, try and examine yourſelf, to ſee if you have gotten the company of the beſt friend, Chriſt Jeſus: if you will not judge and try yourſelf now, there is a day coming, that God will do it for you: a dying day will try our religion to purpoſe. I intreat you, therefore, look ere you leap into eternity, without a teſtificate under Chriſt's hand. Enter into the court of conſcience, and try what knowledge you have gotten of God, more than you have had ſome years ago. Our Lord has told us, that *except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of heaven.* True converſion is *the ſtrait gate and the narrow way*, and there be *few that find it.* Live not at an uncertainty about a matter of ſo great a concernment, as the ſalvation of your ſoul is, ſeeing the knowledge of an intereſt in Chriſt is attainable, and the knowledge of it is comfortable: without Chriſt we can neither live nor die comfortably. I have ſometimes wondered to ſee any look with a glad countenance, that wanted an intereſt in Chriſt. If you have ſeen him, you have ſeen a glory in him that will darken all created glories to you. If he died for you, O live to him, and let the concerns of his glory be your concern in the world.—This may perhaps be the laſt advice from your loving couſin. We muſt all ſhortly appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. Reſts your ſoul's well-wiſher,

GREENOCK, July 12. 1760. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER V.

To JAMES GARDNER, in *Glaſgow*.

JAMES, I have been often afraid, that you and others, would be diſcouraged at the length of my affliction. When I was in health myſelf, and heard of the diſtreſs of others, my heart was like to faint; but now I ſee it is the *joy of my Lord* that is my ſtrength and ſupport under affliction. Glory to him he has been my company in the furnace. O how familiar has he been with my ſoul! He hath condeſcended to keep converſe with my ſoul, when I have been that low, by reaſon of trouble, that I could have been active for no other duty, but that of meditation. O how wonderful and aſtoniſhing is the condeſcendency of God to me, that he who is *the Father of Spirits* ſhould converſe with our ſpirits, as a man doth with his friends! O wonderful love to ſo hell-deſerving a creature! O but the love of God and the enmity of my heart filleth me with wonder. I can do no more but wonder at his love. I long to be above, where I could join with the hundred forty and four thouſand that are about the throne, ſinging praiſes to Jehovah and the Lamb, where I ſhall diſhonour him no more; where I ſhall ſee him for myſelf, and be ſatisfied with his likeneſs. O how joyful is the ſhouts of the coming of the glorious Bridegroom to me! I think, through grace, I could paſs through hell at the neareſt, to be at the full enjoyment of my Lord, within the vail: yet, without him, I can do nothing. Altho' I never had the honour to ſuffer *for* him, he has told me, that *if I ſuffer with him, I ſhall alſo reign with him;* for he has ſaid, *In all your afflictions I am afflicted.*

James, you may ſee what matter of a ſong of praiſe the Lord has given me in this my priſon; he has given me *ground to ſhew forth his loving-kindneſs in the morning, and his faithfulneſs every night.* O what reaſon have

I to bliſs his holy name? And I deſire you to do it alſo. He makes me to trample over both the fear of death and of life. I think it is more difficult for me to live than to die, becauſe of the deceitfulneſs of my own heart. I am continnally in danger of diſhonouring the Lord.—I deſire your ſympathy, your miniſter's, and others of your acquaintance at the throne of grace for me, that the Lord may enable me to glorify him in the fire, and bring me out of it to the praiſe of his own glory. I have been ſometimes very bad ſince I ſaw you; but I am a little better at the time. No more at preſent, but reſt your loving friend, till death,

GREENOCK, Aug. 1ſt, 1761. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER VI.

To ſome of her *Relations*.

MY dear friends, I think it proper to leave you a few advices, when I am unable to ſpeak to you. You know that I am often ſo weak, by reaſon of trouble, that I can neither ſpeak to you, nor others: therefore hear this as God's voice to you; unleſs you hear it as coming from God to you, you will get no good of it.

My dear friends, my advice to you is, firſt, O imitate our glorious Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſought not his own, but his Father's glory. O ſeek his glory in the world in all things, as your chief end: there will be no fear of your good. Our Lord has told us, *Him that honoureth me, will I honour; and him that deſpiſeth me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed of me.*

Dear friends, my ſecond advice to you is, to cloſe with Chriſt, as he is offered by God unto you: no duty can be acceptable to God, while we are out of Chriſt. It is in Chriſt that we and our duties are both acceptable to God. O then, get Chriſt for your por-

tion. O Sirs, ye can neither live nor die comfortably without Chriſt. If ye have gotten any views of the glory of God in Chriſt, you have ſeen him to be a ſuitable Saviour for you. You have ſeen alſo your own emptineſs of every thing that is good. O then, travel much between your own emptineſs and the fulneſs that is in Chriſt. Make this your continual tread, while ye are abſent from him. O ſtudy much the duty of meditation. This is a duty, in which, thro' the bleſſing of God, you may enjoy much of God's favour and friendſhip; yea, much communion and fellowſhip with him, when you are employed about your lawful buſineſs. Dwell much in your thoughts upon the love of Chriſt. —O with what holy confidence may ye converſe with God in Chriſt; the glorious meeting-place where God and man meets together. Chriſt is our way to God and God's way to us. Glory to him for this way of acceſs: it is the way, Sirs, that brings glory to God, and ſalvation to ſinners.

Dear friends, acquaint yourſelves with the Lord of the land that is above; that land of glory: the more acquaintance you have with him, ye will be the leſs afraid to go to him. I think it is one of the greateſt reaſons, why ſo many are afraid to meet with God at death, becauſe of the great eſtrangement that is between God and their ſouls. O but it is good to draw near to God, and look for his coming to them: to them that look for him, he will appear, and his appearance to them will be joyful. *Bleſſed is that ſervant that is found watching when his Lord cometh.*

I know not well what to ſay to ſome of you: I fear you are yet in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity. If you get a duty performed, I am afraid you never queſtioned whether you met with Chriſt in the duty or not. O remember your chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever. You cannot live comfortably without him: ſeek his glory in the world. O do not ſpend your youth and your ſtrength in ful-

filling the luſts of the fleſh, leſt when you come to old age, or a death-bed, and would fain have Chriſt, that God bid you *go to the gods whom you have ſerved, and let them deliver you. I cried, and they would not hear, and it came to paſs, when they cried I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* O then, flee ſpeedily to Chriſt; ſtudy to get in under the covert of his blood and righteouſneſs, there ſhall you live ſafely, and die ſecurely. Take him for your guide through the wilderneſs; and ſay of him, *This is our God, and he will be our guide even unto death.* And that the Lord may enable you to ſay ſo, by the faith of his own operation, is the deſire of your dying friend,

GREENOCK, Aug. 9th, 1761. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER VII.

To Mr. JAMES GARDNER, in *Glaſgow.*

JAMES, I received your letter: I wiſh the Lord who ſeeth in ſecret, may reward you your kindneſs to a priſoner.—You complain, I underſtand, of a wandering heart: I have reaſon to complain of that as well as you have. It is your duty and mine both to make much uſe of Chriſt, who is *made of God unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and complete redemption.* Dwell much in your thoughts upon the love of Chriſt: the more you think upon him, the more glory and excellency you will ſee in him; the more you contemplate on him, by faith, you will ſee the more beauty in him.——James, I am ſure the more beauty you ſee in glorious Chriſt, you will ſee the leſs beauty in time's things that your heart runs out after. I would earneſtly recommend this duty of ſpiritual meditation to you. I know, that without Chriſt we ca

do nothing: all duties are taſteleſs when Chriſt is not found in them. I think, through the Lord's bleſſing, I have found ſo much ſweet communion and fellowſhip with a God in Chriſt, that I have often thought I would recommend it to others, as far as my word or write would go. In the exerciſe of this duty, you may enjoy much of God when you are employed about your lawful calling.

James, you ſee it hath pleaſed the Lord to ſingle me out for long affliction. It is my deſire alſo, that he would ſome how make me uſeful for his own glory in the world. Let that be your deſire at a throne of grace alſo.—Upon Sabbath laſt I was very bad; but I am a little better theſe two days again. I long much for that blaſt that will blow me to the harbour of reſt, where *the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and the weary be at reſt.*——I am very unable to ſpeak unto you; the cords of affliction doth hold me ſo faſt. I know that the Lord will keep me no longer in the furnace than he has glorified himſelf in the trial of faith and patience, and ſerved the purpoſes of his own glory with me: he does all things well. Let me have your ſympathy at the throne of grace, for grace to glorify God in the furnace. No more, but reſt your loving friend, till death,

GREENOCK, Nov. 9th, 1761. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER VIII.

To Mrs. EASTON, in *Lillies-leaf.*

Dear and loving Siſter,

I RECEIVED your letter, of which I was very glad. I intend a little more converſe with you upon paper. I wiſh you and I may be enabled to imitate our glorious Lord Jeſus, who *ſought not his own,*

but his Father's glory. I think it is the hardeſt piece in religion to be denied to ourſelves: this woful ſelf aſpires to robe our glorious King Jeſus of his crown and royal prerogative; but let him wear the crown, in ſpite of enemies within and without us; and let him tread and trample upon us as ſeemeth him good, provided he glorifies himſelf.

I have been often ſorry to hear of your afflictions; yet I was glad you viewed the hand of God in them. I much queſtion if we can get good in any trial, till we ſee God's hand in it. Afflictions are the means God makes uſe of to ſquize the ſap out of created enjoyments; yet, I am of opinion, that a view of our glorious Lord Jeſus, in his beauty and matchleſs excellency, will more darken the beauty of time things, than any affliction.—If I could comfort you with theſe conſolations wherewith the Lord has comforted my ſoul in my afflictions, I would gladly do it. He has ſometimes comforted my ſoul with theſe words, *I will dwell in the midſt of a poor and an afflicted people, and they ſhall truſt in the name of the Lord.* O but theſe words have been ſweet to my taſte; for I am as poor in myſelf, as any poſſibly can be. O but a poor ſinner and rich Saviour is well met. I think much of our life ſhould be ſpent in travelling betwixt his fulneſs and our own emptineſs: *It hath pleaſed the Father that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell.* Glory to him it is a communicative fulneſs; he giveth liberally according to the ſtate of ſuch a King. I am aſhamed of my narrow thoughts of Chriſt and his love: I ought to have deviſed more liberally of Chriſt, and his liberality. I never conceived there was ſo much of Chriſt, and his ſweet love to be found on this ſide heaven, as I have found in him within this half year. Our kind Lord doth not ſuſpend all our joy till we come to the journy's end.

You deſired my ſympathy; and ſuch as it is you have not wanted it, ſince the Lord was pleaſed, in his

adorable ſovereignty, to reveal his purpoſes of love to me concerning your ſon. I long to ſee the promiſe accompliſhed concerning him: it is your duty and mine to plead for it, and to wait upon a promiſing God, who will, in due time, be a performing God. I deſire of you to let me know what your ſon is doing, and to tell him to mind what I ſpoke to him. I deſire to commit him to the glorious advocate with the Father, who is able to make him perfect: Dear ſiſter, I deſire you to help a divour to pay the debt of praiſe to our lovely, ſweet Lord Jeſus.—No more, but reſts your loving friend, and ſoul's well-wiſher,

GREENOCK, Dec. 31ſt, 1761. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER IX.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

SIR,

I AM afraid, in eſſaying to anſwer your requeſt, that I but darken counſel with words without knowledge, to ſpeak of our fair and lovely Prince Jeſus, whoſe love far ſurpaſſes either my thoughts or words. His love ſometimes filleth me with wonder, until I almoſt loſe myſelf in this ſweet ocean, where I can find neither brim not bottom. There are three things in the love of Chriſt which has ſometimes afforded me matter of meditation. There is the *ſtrength* of his love: mountains of difficulties could not hinder it.—There is the *freeneſs* of his love; *He loves freely*.—There is alſo the *ſweetneſs* of his love: *His love is better than life*. I have cauſe to ſpeak it to his praiſe, if I could; he has been pleaſed to bring me into communion and fellowſhip with himſelf; and, by his word and Spirit, converſed with my ſpirit, as a man doth with his friend.

When he goes away again, he leaves ſuch a want behind him, in my ſoul, that nothing can fill it up; and ſuch a flame of deſire, which makes me often to cry, O that time would flee away! O that eternity would uſher in!

Sometimes upon the back of the foreſaid exerciſe, when I get any ſleep, I am ſore terrified with dreams and apprehenſions of the enemy, in inviſible ſhapes, that it is owing to the power of God, that keeps me in my right judgment. At other times my heart is filled with ſuch vile abominable thoughts, that one would think they could not be imagined, they are ſo vile: they fill me with ſelf-abhorrence, in the ſight of a holy God, and make me jealous of the love of God, whether it was himſelf I ſaw, or an idol I took for him. But if I be beguiled, it is a ſweet beguile; I could go to death and the grave with it. When I enter into the court of conſcience to examine myſelf, I think this enemy, ſubtile ſelf, is more diſhonouring than any of the reſt: for it aſpires to no leſs than to wear the crown and royal prerogative of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Sir, you will pleaſe to remember me at a throne of grace; and plead that the Lord may take glory to himſelf out of me a priſoner, and enable me to drink the cup, he hath given me to drink, with patience and reſignation to his holy will, which is always beſt for me. My faith and patience are both upon the trial; but *patience muſt have her perfect work:* I long much for the Bridegroom's coming: he ſometimes ſweetly appears in that word, *Lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh.* The thoughts of his coming revives my heart. O what will it be to be for ever with the Lord; when but a blink of him in his own word, is ſo exceeding ſweet!—Sir, I deſire you would help me to love and praiſe him: he is worthy of all our love. But I muſt break off for I am not able to ſpeak. Sir, you will be ſo good as remember me to thoſe you ſpoke of in your letter: and I deſire you

would favour me with writting again. No more at preſent, but reſt your friend,

GREENOCK, May 4th, 1763. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER X.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Siſter, and companion in affliction,

I HAVE heard, by Mr. Gray, of the continuance of your trouble. You are not alone in your affliction; you have the ſympathy of your glorious High-prieſt, in your trouble: and, if *you ſuffer with him, you ſhall alſo reign with him.* The more your ſufferings are here, they will render you more conformable to your glorious Head, who was *a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief.* My greateſt difficulty is vain thoughts: they are ſometimes ſuddenly darted in upon my mind, although no more welcome than fire into a houſe. I have been thinking upon that ſaying of the apoſtle's, *For me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain.* I think it no wonder the apoſtle called death *gain:* it hath been ground of ſweet meditation to me to think that death will be gain to me, and all others, who believe in Chriſt. Death will let us go to the full enjoyment of Jehovah and the Lamb; our light, our life, our joy; where we ſhall drink of the rivers of pleaſures that run from beneath the throne of the Lamb: there clouds will no more cover from the face of our glorious Sun; no more fear of diſhonouring him. The deceitfulneſs of my heart keeps me often in fear; but there love will be perfected, and caſt out fear: there *we ſhall forget our poverty, and remember our miſery no more:* there *God will be our everlaſting light, and our God our glory.* The views of this fair and fragrant land of

glory makes me often cry out, Why tarries his chariot ſo long? Why is my Lord ſo long a-coming. There will be no more love-ſickneſs, no more pain, for want of poſſeſſion: there the ſoul will be filled with the ſweet and lovely Jeſus.

I wonder why ye do not write to me. I have found the Lord give much countenance to this duty; *while I muſed, the fire burned,* and kindled in my ſoul a ſweeter ſenſe of his love than I could either ſpeak or write: If ye cannot commend Chriſt from a ſenſe of his love upon your ſoul; commend him for himſelf, his ſweetneſs and beauty. That the conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt may be multiplied unto you, is the deſire of your ſiſter,

GREENOCK, May 8th, 1763. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I can make uſe of no ſpirits; the weakeſt of ale and tea is the moſt of my cordials. I am in a very weak condition, and unable to ſpeak much, my ſtomach is ſo pained by it.

LETTER XI.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Siſter,

I AM ſorry to hear of your complaints. You may take your own Lord's word for it, that where he has paid a viſit, he will pay it again: he has ſaid, *I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoice; and your joy no man ſhall take from you.* I am afraid you are ſetting the houſe of Saul againſt the houſe of David, in bearing falſe witneſs againſt the Spirit of God in your own ſoul; for which cauſe he ſometimes leaves his own people to *go mourning without the ſun.* O be aware of

wounding your Lord by your unbelief. Whatever be wrong with you, all is right with him; he comes and he goes ſovereignly: but, within a little, your glorious Sun will ariſe, and diſpel all clouds; and then *the days of your mourning ſhall be ended.*

You are deſirous to know the nature of my trouble: but not to be tedious in writing, I ſent you a little account of it with Mrs. Yeats. Let that ſuffice you, which has often ſufficed me, it is of the Lord. I have been made to view my trouble this way: it is the trial of faith and patience. If the Lord ſhall aſſiſt, I will give ſome reaſons for it.

The Lord did not bring this rod ſuddenly, nor unexpected; I had ſome impreſſions of a trial, now and then, three or four years before I took my trouble. The firſt thoughts of the trial aroſe from the manifeſtations of glorious Chriſt, being far above whatever I had experienced before, eſpecially in public ordinances, and in the duty of meditation. Sabbath days were exceeding refreſhful: the Lord enabled Mr. Cock to ſpeak ſo to my caſe that I thought there was ſcarce any thought in my heart, through the week, but were laid open on the Sabbath. The garments of our glorious Bridegroom ſmelled of myrrh and caſſia, in his own ordinances, whereby I was made glad, and longed much for time flying away, that I might get an eternal Sabbath in the enjoyment of my Lord within the vail. Sometimes in that duty of meditation, when employed about my lawful calling, it pleaſed our glorious Lord Jeſus, to diſcover himſelf in his matchleſs beauty and glorious excellency: his glory darkened all created glories to me, being ſtill more and more impreſſed with my trial. I often opened my mouth to the Lord to this purpoſe, If he would keep my intereſt in himſelf clear, and keep me about his own hand, and give me his preſence, I reſolved, in his ſtrength, to be ſubmiſſive to any trial he ſaw meet for his own glory. I thought that the faith of an intereſt in him, and the

enjoyment of his preſence, would be a good ſupport under any trial: and, I think, I have not been beguiled in this. I have often thought, he was an unworthy wretch, that would not deſire to be content with glorious Chriſt, with the want of all things. I have reaſon to ſay to his praiſe he has granted me my requeſt, in a great meaſure.

It never entered into my heart to think there were ſo much of Chriſt, and his ſweet love, to be found this ſide of heaven, as I have experienced ſince my trouble began. Sometime before my trouble thoſe ſcriptures had ſomething of a conſtant impreſſion upon my ſpirit; *Prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael;* with theſe words, *Put off thine ornaments, that I may know what to do unto thee:* and alſo theſe, *The Lord, whom ye ſeek, will ſuddenly come; even the meſſenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.* From theſe words I ſometimes thought, that it might be ſo, that my diſſolution was near, which I greatly deſired: for I thought then death was no more to me, but to throw myſelf into the arms of glorious Chriſt, and an eternal enjoyment of him. Notwithſtanding of all this, after I was put into the furnace, and met with ſeveral diſappointments, as the furnace trieth metals, and maketh the droſs to appear, O what unmortified corruption did then appear? I found it then a hard matter to be content with the want of Chriſt; nothing leſs would ſatisfy me but the full enjoyment of him. I found it a hard thing to be denied to ſelf, my will roſe up in rebellion againſt the will of God. I provoked him to pour in upon my ſoul ſuch a ſenſe of his wrath, that I thought all that could be indured, this ſide of time, was nothing in compariſon of enduring the ſenſe of that wrath of his diſpleaſure for a few minutes; which brought to my mind a ſaying of Mr. Cock's, "That "the Lord would not caſt a believer into hell; but, "for his ſin he may caſt a ſpark of hell into his ſoul."

It pleaſed the Lord to ſhorten that ſhock of his

wrath, and to make a new intimation of pardon, ſaying unto me, *I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou haſt done.* For ſometime I was ſet a wondering at the love of God in ſubſtituting his own Son in my law-room and ſtead, to bear that load of wrath, that the honourable egreſs of mercy, through him, might vent to me the chief of ſinners. This was often my requeſt to God, O that he would give me that heavenly wiſdom to know the voice of the rod! O that he would ſhew me why he contended with me!—I was often afraid there was ſome ſin unknown to myſelf, for which he contended. At one time it pleaſed the Lord to bear in theſe two texts of ſcripture, with power, upon my ſpirit, John ix. 3. 1 Peter i. 7. From theſe texts of ſcripture I ſaw the Lord's deſign was to manifeſt his own works, and the trial of faith and patience. At firſt view of this, viewing it to be a long rod, I ſaid, O how will I win to the end of it? Whereupon it was immediately impreſſed on my mind, that our Lord ſent none awarefare on his own charges; and he ſaid unto me, *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength perfected in thy weakneſs.* I thought that was enough to get ſtrength proportioned to the trial.—Theſe are a few inſtances of the Lord's way with me. I wiſh he may bleſs to you what is his own, and pardon what is mine. I deſire you would favour me with writting what is the ground of your diſcouragement. I ſhould have wrote to Mr. Gray; but ſeeing I have wrote to you, I deſire you would acquaint him of this.

I thought of writting no more at preſent; but, by advice of my writer leaving the line open, for a few days: on July 2d, as I was viewing yours, I ſaw two requeſts not ſpoke to. You aſk me how I am ſupplyed as to my body? I had ſome reluctancy to anſwer this; but theſe words came to my mind, *Him that confeſſeth me before men, him will I confeſs before my Father alſo;* with a remarkable inſtance of the Lord's condeſcendency,

which you may take for an anſwer with many others. At one time, being in need for refreſhment, I turned my eyes towards the Lord, in the faith of this, that he had the hearts of all men in his hand, and could turn them to ſupply a priſoner. While I was thus employed, the mercy came which I deſired, which filled me with wonder at the condeſcendency of the Lord. While I was thus admiring the Lord's goodneſs, then theſe words came to my mind with much refreſhing, *Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of thoſe things before ye aſk them.* That word, *my Father*, was the ſweeteſt of it all. I thought, O what can they want that have him for their Father? Sure I am, they will want nothing that is for their good. In this the Lord was to me both the hearer of prayer and the anſwerer of it. Through the moſt part of the fore-mentioned day, the Lord was pleaſed to bring me near to himſelf, and filled my mouth with arguments. The matchleſs excellency, and glorious beauty that ſhined in the face of our glorious Emmanuel, raviſhed my ſoul, and pained my heart, through want of full poſſeſſion.—There is in his bleſſed face a ſoul-captivating beauty.

As I am enabled I deſire to ſympathize with your heavy complaints before the throne; and alſo beg yours on my behalf: and that the Lord may recommend himſelf to you, is the deſire of your ſincere friend and acquaintance in our Emmanuel,

GREENOCK, June 30. 1763. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear Friend,

THE conſolations of the Holy Ghoſt be multiplied unto you, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Sir, your letter, dated the ſecond of June, was very refreſhing to me; it brought to my mind an old experience of the Lord's loving-kindneſs to me: *He bringeth things new and old out of his treaſures.* In the year 1742, when he firſt brought me from under the ſpirit of bondage, he made me, for ſome days, to walk in the light of his countenance, which was my light, my life, my joy, my ſtrength. My ſoul was delighted with his beauty; and I began to think that I would never doubt of his love more. I thought my ſpiritual enemies were all dead; but whenever the clouds began to cover the face of my glorious Sun, then darkneſs and deadneſs prevailed; and I was afraid all was but the common operation of the Spirit. I feared that I had committed the unpardonable ſin; whereby I was greatly diſtreſſed. Then the roaring lion of hell often ſuggeſted, it was beſt to put an end to my miſerable life. One morning when I thought I was near the brink of deſpair, the Lord ſaid unto me, *Fear not, I have the keys of hell and of death.* Glory, glory to him, that he never ſuffered me to be tempted above what he enabled me to bear.

Sir, your laſt letter was very ſeaſonable to me. That ſeaſon ſpoken of *giving glory to God by believing*, reſpected me in particular, when a croſs providence ſeems to ſtand in the way of the accompliſhment of the promiſe; it is a part of my exerciſe to wait for the accompliſhment of the promiſe. At the beginning of my trouble, the Lord gave me a fair ſight of the promiſed

land, by faith, which made my ſoul long to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God, and to drink of the river that runs from beneath the throne of God and of the Lamb. Oh! how doth my ſoul long for the embracements of him! *His love is better than wine: his mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.* O that my ſoul were a throne where he might dwell for ever; and my heart a temple for glorifying of him. Angels and ſaints, praiſe ye him.

Sir, what you ſay is your diſtreſſed caſe, I think it has been ſometimes mine: I know it is very diſtreſſing; and what made it very bitter to me was, it was upon the back of the ſweeteſt manifeſtations and intimations of the love of God, which made me wonder at his love, and the enmity of my own heart: then I found that woful rival, pride, aſpiring to wear my Lord's crown and royal prerogative, which diſtreſſed me ſore for ſome time: I would often be made to cry, Let him reign; let King Jeſus wear the crown and the throne of my heart for ever: but ere ever I was aware, I found pride ſpringing out of that exerciſe.—At other times, vile thoughts were darted into my heart, altho' they were no more welcome than fire-balls into a houſe; which made me inſtantly cry unto the Lord, that he would keep my heart, and give me ſin-ſubduing grace.—Thus I have been toſſed like the locuſt, yet the wiſdom of God is to be ſeen in all this, who has ſaid, *Slay them, but not all, leſt my people forget;* leſt they forget their prayers, forget the promiſes; leſt they forget what he is to do for them.

Dear Sir, the Lord has given you Chriſt to hate ſin in yourſelf, and yourſelf for your ſin; this is ſome pledges of the victory: altho' *Gad a troop overcometh, he ſhall overcome at the laſt.* I am afraid of ſecurity. Godly Rutherfoord ſaith, "That a raging devil is better than "a ſleeping one." I had not ſuch a refreſhing time, ſince one of the days I was in meditation about writing to Mrs. Glen. In the morning it pleaſed the Lord

to give me a new meal upon an old viſit. Through the whole of that day he allowed me near acceſs to himſelf, as a man with his friend, except when I was interrupted by perſons coming in. But about the evening he diſcovered more of his raviſhing beauty, that ſhined in the face of our glorious Emmanuel; which glory overſet my weak body for ſome time: I was neither able to move nor to ſpeak. While it was ſo, theſe words weré ſweet ground of meditation, *When Chriſt ſhall appear, he ſhall change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like unto his own glorious body.* The faith of this change, and the neceſſity I found of it, of its being made a ſpiritually ſtrong and powerful body, to bear that weight of glory; were there but a little of it let out, it would ſoon overwhelm our created faculties. In the mean time I was a little afraid of a new trial, fearing the deceitfulneſs of my own heart, and the enemy without made me look to himſelf to keep me from ſin. Let him do with me what ſeemeth him good. The ſame night I was ſore diſtreſſed with trouble on my body, but enjoyed a ſweet ſenſe of his love upon my ſoul. It had ſome ſweet impreſſion on my ſoul till that day eight days.

Sir, I deſire you to help me, a divour, to pay the debt of praiſe to ſo kind a Lord: requeſt the Lord for me, that he may take glory to himſelf out of a priſoner. Favour me with writting again. Remember me to Mrs. Glen. No more at preſent, but reſts your loving friend,

GREENOCK, Aug. 30. 1763. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear Friend,

I RECEIVED, Sir, what you ſent alongſt with your ſon. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for your kindneſs to me, who am leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies. *What am I? what is my father's houſe*, that any ſhould take notice of me? I had ſome thoughts not to have wrote to you till you had written more particularly to me: but I am ſo indebted to the free and ſovereign grace of God, I have cauſe, if I could, to proclaim my Lord's praiſes, and to ſpend my ſhort bit of time to his glory. We are all on the wing for eternity; time is but a ſhadow. O the inconceivable joy of being with Jehovah and the Lamb! O the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, that is to be found this ſide of time. The Lord has been ſhaking this clay houſe near theſe ſix years, which ſpeaks forth its diſſolution: but he will build it again, and faſhion it like unto his glorious body. It has been brought very low ſince the laſt time I wrote to you; my trouble was ſo great I found a neceſſity of divine ſupport to bear it. The Lord, who has hitherto helped me, has brought to my mind this conſideration, that the rod was in the hand of a loving Father; and that there was no affliction in my cup, but what was for his own glory and my good. The trouble had ſome effects which it had not formerly, that did a little alarm me with the thoughts of preſent death, at which I was very glad; but I deſired to be all ſubmiſſion to the will of the Lord, whatever pleaſed him. Sometimes my will did ſweetly acquieſce in the will of God; but ere ever I was aware, I would have had my own will again, which kept me in a conflict. My

trouble roſe to ſuch a height, that beholders thought I had ſtept into eternity. I did not know but it might have been ſo; in the meantime, I found a great ſenſe of the Lord's abſence, which put me to a little ſtand. If I have not miſapplied his faithful word, he will give me a joyful paſſage into the land of glory. I committed my ſpirit to him who is able to keep it. For ſome time thereafter, I cannot tell you where my ſpirit was, whether it was up or down: after a little recovery, I heard one praying; and after prayer was over, he ſaid, Amongſt the many *all things* the Lord has done for you, he will make this work for your good alſo. I ſaid, I am ſhipwrecked back again. O the aſtoniſhing condeſcendency of our Lord, who ſaid unto me, *Let the Lord be glorified, and he will appear to your joy.* I thought it was as if he had ſaid on the matter, Let me glorify my ſtrength in your weakneſs; let me glorify my wiſdom and truth, and I will appear to your joy. It is well.

Sir, it is not our Lord's kind way to give a fair ſight of heaven and glory, and to break the heart with the want of it. Glory to him, the more he gives of the earneſt of the inheritance, it doth not diminiſh the full poſſeſſion. Sir, I deſire to bleſs the Lord for his goodneſs to your ſoul: a ſight of the fair and amiable countenance of our Lord Jeſus will make glad in the ſadeſt of times. Sir, the day is a-coming, when you will get another ſight of all your trials. I think, if my ſtrength would allow me, and it were not tedious to my writer, I would tell you from ſweet experience, that the trials that were moſt croſs to my nature, was beſt for me. I deſire to bleſs the Lord, he did not give me my will; and his own wiſdom has ſhined moſt bright in them to me, in ordering them for his own glory and my good: *The proſperity of fools deſtroys them.*

Sir, favour me with writting again as ſoon as poſſible. Send me word how Mrs. Glen is. Let me have your ſympathy at the throne of grace. O help me to

love and to praiſe the Lord. I wonder I can love him ſo little: he is worthy of all our love. No more at preſent; but reſts your loving friend,

GREENOCK, Oct. 11th, 1763. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XIV.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Friend,

ONE part of your letter was to me very glad tidings; the other part was very ſad tidings: but, O what think ye of the wonderful condeſcendency of God, who made the ſaddeſt tidings in it, to have the ſweeteſt effect to me. *Extoll the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.* Sir, I am afraid to ſpeak what I intend to you, leſt *I darken counſel by words without knowledge.* He who hath ſaid, *I will be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael,* he loves to have ſupplicants about his throne; and none are at a loſs by having many errands there. He allowed me near acceſs to himſelf in behalf of your daughter: I think the Lord hath ſaid concerning her, *I have loved her with an everlaſting love: I will cleanſe the blood that hath not been yet cleanſed.* It is for the honour of our glorious King Jeſus to paſs over a tranſgreſſion. Behold what unparallelled love this is: if we would have a parallel to it, we muſt leave the earth and go to heaven. *As the Father hath loved me, ſo have I loved you; continue ye in my love.* Sir, I once thought to conceal the Lord's loving-kindneſs from you, till thoſe words were borne in upon me, *Comfort ye my people; go tell my diſciples, and Peter:* as if our Lord had ſaid, Go tell my diſciples, and poor broken-hearted Peter, I am riſing indeed: it will be glad news to him. In thoſe words I

got a wonderful view of your kind Lord's ſympathy with you in your trouble, which filled me for ſome time with wonder; whereupon I deſired all the hoſts of heaven to praiſe him, and my own ſoul alſo, though I know not how to perform ſuch an exerciſe. — I remain your ſincere friend,

GREENOCK, Dec. 15. 1763. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XV.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

WHAT induces me, Sir, at preſent to write to you, is the glory and honour of God, who hath done ſo great things for ſo vile a creature. O that ye may be excited to praiſe and thankfulneſs to him for his loving-kindneſs. I have been taking a view of the Lord's way with me through this wilderneſs journey: his ways with me has been very wonderful; for the moſt part of my life has been a life of troubles, either inward or outward. I deſire to bleſs the Lord it has been ſo: when I thought he dealt hardeſt with me, I ſee now he was doing me moſt good.—Sir, I intend, if the Lord will, to remark unto you ſome of the acts of his loving-kindneſs. O that I could ſo record them, that God might get all the glory, and others be comforted. The firſt inſtance of his loving-kindneſs, ſo far as I remember, was in the year 1740. I was then ſo well pleaſed with my own condition, that I thought if there was three that would go to heaven, I would be one of them. I was induced, by the example of others, to perform duties, although from no higher principle than ſelf, and to obtain ſalvation by the works of the law. In the foreſaid year, it pleaſed the Lord

by his Spirit, on the firſt Sabbath of April, to ſet home, by the fooliſhneſs of preaching, the ſpirituality of the holy law; thereby *ſin revived, and I died.* Then I began to conſider, for what end I came into the world; and ſaw that it was to glorify God. I thought I had wholly loſt that noble end. I ſaw I had ſpent my fourteen years without any view of the glory of God. I viewed myſelf juſt like a malefactor under the ſentence of death, only I knew not the day of my execution. I thought there was nothing betwixt me and the bottomleſs pit, but the brittle thread of natural life, which could ſoon be cut aſunder at God's command.

While I thus ſtood trembling at mount Sinai, condemned by God, and condemned by my own conſcience, waiting for my ſentence coming forth, it pleaſed the Lord to bring me to mount Zion, and to ſhew me the glory of his grace in Chriſt Jeſus, and to fill my ſoul with joy, peace, and believing. O how ſweet then was theſe words to my ſoul, *The law of the Spirit of life, that is in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.*

So fooliſh was I, that I thought all difficulties had been over: I thought I would never doubt of the love of God any more; but, Oh! alas! whenever clouds began to cover the face of my glorious Sun, and my ſpiritual enemies began to rage, I concluded my laſt ſtate to be worſe than the firſt. Then the enemy began to aſſault me, that I had committed the unpardonable ſin, whereby I was greatly diſtreſſed.—Again, the enemy ſuggeſted to me, that it was beſt to put an end to my miſerable life; which temptation was of long continuance. This was in the latter end of the year 1741.: it continued now and then till the year 1757.

I never ſaw ſo much of the wiſdom of God, the faithfulneſs and the power of God in any trial, as in this.—The *wiſdom* of God ſhined in it, firſt in imbittering the pleaſures of time by it. Youth is a ſeaſon our corruptions have much need to be borne down

this ſent me many errands to the throne of grace.—His *faithfulneſs* ſhined alſo in it, in not ſuffering me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear.—His *power* alſo in upholding me: *when my foot was near to ſlip, his mercy held me up.* The enemy made often uſe of the ſaying of the unjuſt jugde to the woman, *I will avenge her of her adverſaries, leſt by her continual coming ſhe weary me.* The enemy often ſaid, by his continual tempting, he would weary me out at laſt; and the longer I continued a profeſſor of religion, I would diſhonour God the more. This made me ſay ſometimes, Woes me that ever I was a profeſſor of religion; for it was the fear of diſhonouring God, and the fear of wounding the ſpirits of his people, that had weight with me when no other thing had it.

One time when I was in this diſtreſs, it pleaſed God to lay open to me our Lord's temptations, where he was tempted to deny his Sonſhip, to ſelf-murder, and to devil-worſhip; with theſe words, *If theſe things were done in the green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry;* with, *Conſider him leaſt ye be weary and faint in your minds.* O how ſweet a view was this to me! that I had a tempted Lord to come unto, who knows well *how to ſuccour them that are tempted.* When the enemy came to our Lord he found none of his ſtuff in him; but there is much of it in me, which made me fear. I muſt obſerve to the praiſe of the Lord, in this diſtreſs I had often near acceſs to God in prayer: but the enemy had almoſt frightened me from the place where I ſometimes uſed to go to that duty.

One Sabbath-day I was much deſerted: Mr. Cock had this obſervation in his ſermon, "For the ſins of "God's people great eſtrangement took place between "him and their ſouls: they become as ſtrangers one "with another." This was a weighty ſaying to me; for I found a great ſenſe of abſence, and feared it might be of long continuance. I thought, through grace, I would rather have any trial with Chriſt, than

a world without him: but ere I was aware, the Lord ſurprized me with a love-viſit. I came home from his ordinance rejoicing, and went to the place I was afraid to go to before, to offer to the Lord the ſacrifice of thankſgiving. It pleaſed the Lord, in his wonderful love and condeſcendency, to double the viſion of his glory which I ſaw before in his own ordinance: he allowed me much communion and fellowſhip with himſelf. I ſaw ſo much of the Lord in that place, that I would not have been afraid of a hell of devils. In that part I ſaw the Lord to be more of might by far than legions of them.

Sometimes the Lord warned me by his word of this trial: at other times I was attacked by the enemy, upon the back of the neareſt communion with the Lord, when I had no thought of him. I got this uneaſy thorn to keep me humble and watchful.—Let thoſe things excite you to praiſe and thankfulneſs to the Lord, who hath made my ſoul to eſcape as a bird from the ſnare of the fowler.—Remember me to Mrs. Glen, and other friends. I reſt your friend in Chriſt,

GREENOCK, Jan. 7th, 1764. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XVI.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I WAS much afraid, Sir, after I wrote to you laſt, that it had been miſcarried, and would have expoſed religion to contempt: but the glorious hearer of prayer ſupported me with theſe words, *Upon all the glory there ſhall be a defence: it ſhall return to your joy.*—When I received yours in March, I had lately met with an outward trial: when I opened it, and looked upon

ſome texts of ſcripture, they were very refreſhing to me through the Lord's bleſſing. I ſaw a ſweet harmony between the promiſe and the providence of God. I thought if it had come half a day ſooner it would not have been ſo refreſhing. I ſaw alſo the longer it was before a promiſe was accompliſhed, the more the wiſdom of God ſhined in the accompliſhment of it: and from it I was made to infer, that all the delays I had met with in my longed-for outgate, the wiſdom of God, and the glory of God, would appear more in it.

I was telling you in my laſt, that I had been led to take a view of the Lord's way with me through this wilderneſs journey. I ſaw the trials that had been moſt croſs to my nature to be well ordered. I deſire to bleſs the Lord, I got not my own will.—Upon the back of this view, the Lord is calling me to this exerciſe, to record his loving-kindneſs, and to cauſe his name to be remembered. But there appeared many difficulties in the way. Firſt, my own ignorance, who am ſo ignorant, and as a beaſt before him. Secondly, I had a great averſion to diſcover the ſecrets that had been betwixt God and my own ſoul to any other. But I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of God, he brought me back to himſelf, with every piece of this work, and anſwered all my objections from his own word. As to the firſt, he anſwered, *If any man lake wiſdom, let him aſk it of God, who giveth libraly. He that hath wrought you for the ſelf ſame thing is God.* My ſecond objection was anſwered from theſe words, *Him that is aſhamed of me before men, of him will I be aſhamed before my Father and his angels.* Notwithſtanding all this, I found a great averſion in my mind to that exerciſe: then that word came, *Be not diſobedient to the heavenly viſion. Shall his love be told in the grave; or his faithfulneſs in death?*—I fell a conſulting with myſelf, if I might not delay it for ſome time, and wait to ſee if the Lord would give ſome ability to write myſelf; and with that I went to the Lord alſo: but this petition was partly

againſt my own light; for I think the Lord ſaith to me by his word, *The day of your redemption draweth near; if it were not ſo, I would have told you:* but while I aſked, theſe words came, *Neither tempt ye him, as ſome of them tempted;* with theſe, *When they believed not his word, he gave them up to wander in counſels of their own.* At this my ſoul was ſet a trembling, and I durſt ſpeak no more of that matter. Then it came to my mind, that the Lord ſendeth none awarfare on their own charges, and I was made to plead with him, who knoweth the hearts of all men, that he would provide an inſtrument that would be moſt for his own glory. O the aſtoniſhing condeſcendency of God; while I aſked, theſe words came with a ſweet heart-melting and humbling power alongſt with it, *Grant thee according to thine hearts wiſh, and fulfill all thy counſels.*

For ſome days together, I was ſo racked between two extremes, with pride and ſelf on the one hand, and difficulties on the other: I was often conſtrained to go to God with theſe petitions, O for more conformity to God! O for a greater meaſure of the Holy Spirit, that he would clothe me with humility as with a garment, and with zeal for his own glory as with a cloke. I got near acceſs to God in aſking theſe things; and theſe words ran with me, *Our heavenly Father giveth the Holy Spirit to them that aſk it of him.* Now, my great difficulty was, I could remember nothing of by-paſt experiences; it was to me altogether impoſſible, without the Spirit: but while I was much perplexed, it pleaſed the Lord, in his adorable ſovereignty, to bring to my rememberance former experiences with a brighter diſplay of his glory, and revelation of the will of God, than I had at firſt. O this wonderful condeſcendence of God, it filled my ſoul with wonder and a ſweet ſenſe of his love, ſo that my ſoul was made to cry to him, O for an opportunity to record thy loving kindneſs. Then he anſwered me with that word, *I*

will and ye ſhall.—O what of God I ſaw in that word! I cannot tell you of it; come and ſee, or come and taſte will beſt declare.

Sir, I deſire the help of your prayers, Mr. Calier's, Mrs. Glen's, and other friends to the Lord, for direction concerning what is before-mentioned. I reſt your ſincere friend,

GREENOCK, June 18. 1764. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XVII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

I RECEIVED yours, Sir, dated the 5th of May. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for his loving-kindneſs to you, in your ſhort affliction. When a faith's view of our Lord's drinking the bitter waters of the curſe of a broken law, and the wrath of an offended God, maketh the bitter waters of Marah ſo ſweet, O what will the wine in paradiſe be!—Well may it be ſaid of the purchaſed redemption, applied by the Spirit, that it is like the ſalt that Eliſha caſt into the water-ſprings, it healed the waters and the barren ground; it healeth the ſoul of ſpiritual deadneſs and ſpiritual barrenneſs. Many a time when I have been beginning to ſink under my trouble, he enabled me to look to himſelf, and I was lightned: if he had not made me ſenſible of my own weakneſs I had forgotten where my ſtrength lay.

Sir, what I intend at preſent, is to remark unto you, if the Lord will, ſomething of his loving-kindneſs ſince I wrote unto you laſt. You may compare the laſt two letters and this together, and then you will have a ſhort view of this year's exerciſe. Upon the back of the ſweet view of the former experiences, I ſpoke of

in the laſt, I was ſore diſtreſſed with bodily trouble; I thought my trouble was ſo great I could not ſubſiſt under it.—Then a terror of death ſeized me, that every moment my breath would go out, and then where was the performance of theſe things, *viz.* what I ſpoke of in the laſt. Notwithſtanding my ſin and folly, in ſo fooliſhly requitting the Lord, in overlooking both his power and his faithfulneſs, the Lord bore in theſe words with compoſed ſubmiſſion, *Fear not, only believe; ye ſhall not taſte death till all be fulfilled.* After this I was made to look over all difficulties that appeared in the way, both inward and outward; and he enabled me to plead with himſelf for the accompliſhment of his own word: and I muſt ſay to his praiſe, he allowed me much nearneſs to himſelf in pleading with him; and he ſaid unto me, *As a prince haſt thou had power with God, and prevailed.* He gives of his own to ſerve him with; without him I can do nothing.

O, Sir, but this has been a remarkable ſummer: few days in it but I have had ſome blinks of his reconciled countenance, and ſome ſweet word from his learned tongue. O help me to love and to praiſe him.—In the beginning of Auguſt laſt, it pleaſed the Lord to open the treaſures of joy and pleaſure that are at his right hand, in a very large manner, for two days together. The firſt day I got a very ſweet view of the oneneſs betwixt the Father and the Son, and believers in him; *I in you, and you in me,* John xx. 17. *I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father; unto my God, and your God.* O what wonderful ſights I beheld of the Father in Chriſt! The wiſdom of the Father is to be ſeen in him; the power of the Father is to be ſeen in him, in upholding him in the great undertaking; the counſels of the Father are to be ſeen in him, *The counſel of peace was between them both,* and are made manifeſt to us in Chriſt: but I muſt not inſiſt.—On the ſecond day, in the morning, I got a large view of that ſtore of joy that is at the right hand of God:

thought I could hold nothing of it, my vents are ſo narrow; but a little of that new wine of conſolation, in compariſon of what God hath to give, would overwhelm our created faculties. O to be made like him! O to ſee him as he is! O what could I do, but wonder at his love, and ſometimes invite angels and ſaints to praiſe him! ſun, moon, and ſtars to praiſe him; praiſe him dragons and every deep; praiſe him, O my ſoul!

At this time the Lord gave me ground to hope from his word that he would give me a triumphant death: *Prove me herewith, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts; if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour down a bleſſing till there be not room enough to receive it.* It ran in my mind, that this was either a preſage of my departure, or of ſome new trial; but ſoon, was what I feared moſt: for many a ſlip my deceitful heart has given me, upon the back of near communion with God. My ſoul looketh out joyfully for the Bridegroom's coming, when I will get on the fair white rob of the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, and get a palm of victory in my hand, and a crown of unfading glory upon my head, *When the chief ſhepherd ſhall appear.* I was very diſtreſſed thro' the night; and thoſe words ran in my mind, *It is my deſire that Job be tried to the end. In the world you ſhall have tribulation; but in me ye ſhall have peace.* The ſweet taſte I had gotten of that peace made me to ſay of it, as David ſaid of Goliath's ſword, *Give me it, for there is none like it.* I was made alſo often to ſay, Lord keep me from ſin, and glorify thyſelf in me; and do with me as ſeemeth thee good.

Sir, I ſpoke of a night in my letter, dated Jan. 7th, I thought I would not have been afraid of a hell of devils: I thought the Lord ſpoke ſomething that night concerning this year's exerciſe; but I could never ſee how he would accompliſh his word, till this year.—

Now, he hath made me to ſay of him, *Lo now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and ſpeakeſt no parable.*

Now, Sir, concerning the exerciſe I ſpoke to you about, that the Lord was calling me to; ſo far as I ſee, it is near accompliſhed. Now it is the language of my ſoul, with old Simeon, *Let thy* priſoner *depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* I have ſeen much of the Lord's countenance about this exerciſe: for he anſwered all my difficulties about it, from his own word; and now he hath done as he hath ſaid, and made me to ſay, *True and faithful are thy words, O thou king of ſaints.*

On the Sabbath morning I was more than ordinary enlarged in prayer; and that word came with a very heart-melting power, *What would ye that I ſhould do unto you?* I was made to put it back into the Lord's hand to teach me what to aſk; for truly I knew not: immediately the church's caſe was repreſented to me both in her national and perſonal apoſtacy from God. Time and ſtrength will not allow me to mention particulars: only theſe few that I ſee daily prevailing. O what matter of grief is it to ſee the conformity of profeſſors to the world, and the want of zeal for God's glory! I think our Lord has a controverſy with this people for entertaining heart-idols: he complains that he is wounded in the houſe of his friends. It is matter of grief alſo, to ſee ſome profeſſors who have loſt the ſavour of religion they ſometime had. I got leave to weep over theſe abominations before the Lord, and to plead for his return with days of power to his own ordinances. O but I got a ſweet view of him in theſe words, *I will get me to the mountains of myrrh, and to the hills of frankincenſe, until the day break and the ſhadows flee away.* I thought this reſpected his preſence in the ordinance; his preſence in the ordinances makes them *ſmell as a field that the Lord hath bleſſed.* I was made to hope that the Lord will preſerve a remnant

in poor backſliding Scotland, although, at ſome times, there ſhould be but a few names in it.

I know not, Sir, but this may be the laſt time that I will write to you. O help me to love and praiſe the Lord for his truth, and the kindneſs of his love. Remember me to all friends in Chriſt: tell them both to pray and praiſe for me, my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord. Reſts your friend,

GREENOCK, Oct. 23. 1764. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Let me have your return as ſoon as poſſible.

LETTER XVIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

IF I could commend my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord, and his way with me, to you, I have cauſe to do it; but without him I can do nothing. I think there is a revenue of praiſe and honour due to him, from me above all others. His wiſdom ſhineth in all his works and ways, were our eyes open to behold it. Well might we ſay, *Who is a God like unto thee? Thou art glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders.*

A few days after I wrote you laſt, it pleaſed the Lord, in his free love and adorable ſovereignty, one morning to give me a glorious manifeſtation of his love, and communication of his mind, in thoſe words, *Fear not to go down unto Egypt, I will go down with thee; and I will ſurely bring thee up again: he carefully keepeth his bones:* with, *Though after my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.* I got a pleaſant view of death and judgment, which made my ſoul chearfully acquieſce in the will of God, to go down

to the grave in the faith of his going down with me; and in the faith of his bringing me up, and changing this vile body, and faſhioning it like unto his glorious body. By thoſe words in Job, it was brought to my mind, that remarkable appearance, and glorious deliverance the Lord wrought for my ſoul in the year 1741. Oh! how terrible was death to me then! I could no more believe than I could create a world. I ſaw the holy law purſuing me for the debt of perfect obedience, and no ſafety from divine wrath, nor reſt to the ſole of my foot in all the creation. Death appeared to be at the door, and hell following at the back of death; for, at that time, I was in a fever. My ſoul trembled to look out at the windows of the clay houſe. As a divine once ſaid, 'The ſoul of the wicked 'was like a ruſty ſword, ſweir to draw out of its 'ſheath.'—In this great extremity, glory to God, he bare in, by an irreſiſtible power upon my ſpirit, Job xix. 25, 26, 27. wherein I got a raviſhing ſight of the living Redeemer, and God pacified in him, and well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake. O that I could give thanks to him, at the rememberance of his holineſs, who delivered my ſoul from going down to the pit, and my life from deſtruction.—But I return again to where I was.

Bleſſed be God, he ſtrengthened me for the trial before it came. About twelve o'clock the fore-mentioned day, he vailed his glory again, and withdrew the ſweet ſenſe of his love: immediately my trouble increaſed to ſuch a height, I thought it threatened a preſent diſſolution, and was often ſo for ſix weeks time. I had indeed few blinks of his glorious countenance all that time; bleſſed be his holy name he enabled me to reſt on his faithful word, without any fear of death, or any jealouſy of his love. When my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord withdrew, he left behind him, in my ſoul, a vehement deſire for the enjoyment of himſelf, which ſwallowed up all fear of the Jordan of death,

which runneth in the way.—Well may the apoſtle call death *gain*. O what think ye of the beautiful viſion of Jehovah and the Lamb! what think ye of conformity to God? what think ye of freedom from ſin, and the inbeing of it? O unſpeakable gain!

When I received your letter, dated Nov. 7th, I was aſtoniſhed at the glorious condeſcendence of God to you and me both; for it exactly correſponded with my preſent exerciſe, as if ye had been a witneſs to it: *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will manifeſt to them his holy covenant.* When I received the other, dated Nov. 24th, it added to my former affliction, till it pleaſed our glorious and kind Lord to allow me ſome intercourſe with himſelf on your behalf: and theſe ſcriptures were ſweetly repreſented unto me, *All things ſhall work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpoſe.* And, *I have ſeen his affliction, and I have heard his groanings: I have put his tears into my bottle.* And *againſt all griefs he ſendeth forth comfort.* And *the Lord is known by his judgments.*—In thoſe words I got a ſweet view of the Lord's love and ſympathy with you in your trial, and thereby the load was lifted off my ſpirit concerning your trial: for, it was like to be too heavy for me. I would aſk you what of the Lord you have ſeen in that judgment?

About the end of the ſix weeks, formerly mentioned, I have ground to acknowledge, to the praiſe of the Lord, he again brought me unto the chambers of his preſence, and allowed me new manifeſtations of his love, and ſome new intimations of his mind from theſe ſcriptures; *I know the thoughts that I think towards you, are thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* O wonderful love, to have the thoughts of God's heart made manifeſt to us in Chriſt! And alſo that other word, *Will I bring to the birth, and not cauſe to bring forth?* The womb of the promiſe may be long big with God's purpoſes; but it will not miſ-

carry: *I will cauſe to bring forth, ſaith the Lord.* And the Lord ſhewed me from Heb. x. 36. that there was ſomething of his will to fill up with me in this world yet; and when the will of God was done, I ſhould *receive the promiſe.*—O that theſe things may excite you to love and praiſe him, who is *fairer than the ſons of men.*

Let me have your ſympathy, and other friends, at the throne of grace. Plead with the glorious hearer of prayer, that he may not let me ly idle in his houſe; but that he may take glory to himſelf out of a poor empty nothing. Reſts your ſiſter in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Jan. 27. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I have reaſon to be thankful that I have received as much ſtrength as to take a drink with my own hand, which I think no ſmall mercy. I deſire to know how it was that the watchman wounded you.—Your daughter has been often borne in on my mind; and I have had liberty on her behalf at the throne of grace. I deſire you would favour me with writing again. Let Mrs. Glen, and Jean Ramſay, and other friends know how I am.

LETTER XIX.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Siſter, and beloved of our Lord Jeſus,

THE laſt line I wrote to you, I had ſome thoughts it would have been the laſt. We need not be afraid we will loſe any thing by waiting upon our Lord's time. He comes into his garden to gather his lillies as ſoon as they are full ripened for glory. Pa-

tience muſt have her perfect work, that *we may be perfect, entire, wanting nothing*, James i. 4.

The laſt week was a very ſore week of trouble to me: I ſaw an abſolute need of divine ſtrength to ſupport and carry up under it. On the Sabbath morning I got a ſweet view of theſe words, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.* Three things in theſe words were ground of ſweet meditation to me. The *lightneſs* of our affliction: 1. They are light in compariſon of what we deſerve, or what the damned in hell doth endure. 2. They are light, compare them with what our bleſſed Lord ſuffered in our room and ſtead; *He ſuffered, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God:* and by virtue of his ſufferings the courſe is taken out of all our afflictions. 3. They are light afflictions; and ſo they are compared to a *moment*, which is the ſhorteſt diviſion of time. What is our life but a moment, in compariſon with vaſt eternity. As Mr. Dodwell ſaith, "What can be great to him, that counts the world "*nothing*; or long to him, that counts the life of man "but a *ſpan*?"

Dear Siſter, I was ſorry to look upon your laſt letter, becauſe of your condition: in it you have ſeveral complaints.

1. Ye ſay, "My ſoul is in a fainting condition, for "want of his preſence." If our Lord had not firſt loved you, ye could not have loved and longed for him again. *The Lord will ſurely ſatisfy the longing ſoul; he will fill the hungry ſoul with his goodneſs.* It may be the Lord will feed your faith, but not your ſenſe: the Lord's people would have ſometimes a feaſt of his love, when he ſees a feaſt of godly ſorrow better for them.

2. Ye ſay, "I fear my ſtate is not right." A believer's ſtate is ſet right in juſtification, and ſin can never put it wrong again. But, whatever be wrong

with you, rejoice that all is right with your glorious head and huſband, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

3. Ye ſay, "When I cry, he ſhutteth out my cry, "and I cannot cry." Ye ſhould beware of drawing harſh concluſions of your Lord's conduct towards you: he may hear your cry, though it be not ſpeedily anſwered; if he ſtrengthen you with ſtrength in your ſoul, and keep you about his throne, I think ye have no reaſon to conclude that he doth no hear your cry.

Mr. Hutchiſon ſaith, "When our petitions are not "anſwered, we ſhould look there be not ſome unre- "pented of guilt ſtanding in the way; or, it may be, "they have an habitual, carnal, ill frame, that the "Lord would have rectified by keeping the ſupplicant "at his bar: the prayer of faith he will anſwer in his "own time." It may be the Lord was trying you, if you would go to another door. Sometimes when I could not get liberty in prayer, my own heart has condemned my ſelfiſh diſpoſition in prayer, becauſe I was not more concerned for the church of God, and for the good of particular perſons with whom I was acquainted. Sometimes the Lord has been pleaſed to lay a concern upon my ſpirit for the church, and for ſome particular perſons; and then I got ſomething for them, and a feaſt for my own ſoul.

4. Ye ſay, that "You ſee no outgate from the ca- "lamity that is on your body in time."—Dear Siſter, in theſe words ye preach forth my ſin as well as your own; too often have I conſulted with carnal reaſon and unbelief: the language thereof is, that there is no more view of an outgate from your trouble, than was the firſt day of it. I never tried that way of reaſoning, but I was like to loſe my feet, and land myſelf in confuſion. Diſcontentment is a bitter ingredient we put into our own cup. And when I examined into the grounds of it, I found much pride and ſelf at the bottom of it. O proud, ſinful duſt, that will not ſubmit to the will of God. *Self* is both a *deceiver* and a *robber*;

ber; it robs Chriſt of his glory, and it aſpires to nothing leſs than his crown and royal prerogatives. O to be truly humbled! it is of the Lord's mercies that I am not conſumed, who am leſs than the leaſt of his mercies.—Dear Siſter, by waiting on God, and exerciſing faith, patience, and ſubmiſſion to his will, ye may ſee an outgate, although not a deliverance. O that we were helped to Abraham's way of it; he conſidered not the difficulty that was in the way of the accompliſhment of the promiſe, but was *ſtrong in the faith, giving glory to God.*

5. "Ye fear his judgment will be lengthened out." Such is our folly, we think of a great while to come, and ſo make apprehended future events a preſent diſtreſs. Were we more frequent in our converſe with eternity, it would make our afflictions appear but ſhort, which worketh glory for us, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If our ſufferings be a *filling up of the ſufferings of Chriſt in the fleſh,* Col. i. 24.; and we made more conformed to our glorious head, who *firſt ſuffered,* and *then entered into his glory:* we have reaſon to rejoice in all our afflictions. I am perſuaded, that a ſight of the fair face of our Redeemer in heaven, in his raviſhing beauty and glorious excellencies, and all the divine perfections of God ſhining brightly in his glorious perſon, will more than make amends for all our afflictions. I have reaſon to bleſs the Lord, that I have wearied leſs this ſeventh year of my affliction, than I did the firſt year. I find idleſet no ſmall cauſe of wearying. It pleaſed the Lord to call me to ſuch duties, as thereby he gave me many errands to his throne of grace; for I needed all my furniture from himſelf. Sometimes a battle with *ſickneſs* and *pain,* and thereby needed a conſtant depending upon the Lord for ſtrength to bear it, with patience and ſubmiſſion to his holy will: and I am glad divine ſtrength is engaged to uphold me; for, ſaith he, *Fear not, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee by the right-hand*

of my righteouſneſs. Sometimes I have a battle with a *troop of vain thoughts*, which is worſt of all; and I can get no victory over them, till he whom the winds and ſea obey, come into my ſoul, by the divine influence of his holy Spirit; then the raging waves of corruption, that raged before, are quiet and ſtill.—O it is good to be with God, though it were in a hot furnace.

Dear Siſter, wait upon the Lord, in the way of his judgments; *Be of good courage, and he will ſtrengthen your heart.* That the Lord may enable you to wait, is the deſire of your ſiſter in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Feb. 28th, 1763. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XX.

TO JAMES WILSON, *my Brother-in-law.*

Dear and loving Brother and Siſter,

I LONG to know if your ſouls be growing in conformity to God; *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more until the perfect day.* We read Geneſis iii. 9. that *the Lord God called unto Adam, and ſaid, Adam, Where art thou?* The Lord doth not need that any ſhould inform him of man, for he hath a perfect knowledge of things paſt, preſent, and to come. I take the import of the queſtion to be, 1. The Lord would have Adam to *bethink himſelf* of his ſelf-deſtroying condition, and of his utter inability to help his condition. All acceſs to heaven, by the covenant of works, was ſhut againſt him; and a flaming ſword placed to keep him from the tree of life. 2. I think alſo the queſtion imports, Adam's *abſolute need* of a Saviour and Redeemer, which was immediately revealed to him in the firſt promiſe, *The ſeed of*

the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head. Put the above queſtion to your own ſouls, which the Lord put to Adam, Gen. iii. 9. poſe your own ſouls as in the ſight of God and your own conſcience, what ſtate your ſouls are in, whether in a ſtate of nature, or in a ſtate of grace: if ye are in Chriſt, ye have once ſeen yourſelves to have been without him, and to have been under the wrath and curſe of God. *He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him,* John iii. 18, 36. Blind proud man, deceived by Satan, thinks he hath a goodneſs in heart and in life, which renders him worthy of divine mercy and favour, which he dares to plead, before God, as the Phariſee did; *I thank thee I am not as other men.* But when the Lord is about to apply ſalvation to an elect ſoul, he empties it of its own righteouſneſs, and ſhews it its ill-deſerts, hell-deſervings, and miſeries; and alſo reveals the remedy, in order to make it willing to be ſaved in the Lord's way; the way of faith is poſſeſſed and enjoyed, and is a living out of ourſelves, upon the Chriſt of God, upon his infinite fulneſs and fitneſs to ſave ſinners, from the deepeſt miſery to the higheſt glory.

Dear Brother and Siſter, reſt not upon a profeſſion of religion, nor the performance of duties; theſe will not profit you in the hour of death: to have a name to live, and to want the thing ſignified by the name, is blaſphemy; *I know the blaſphemy of them that ſay they are Jews, and are not,* Rev. ii. 9.

Dear Siſter, ye have need to look what fruits have followed your rod: there is a rod ſpoken of, Ezek. vii. 11. it made my ſoul tremble to think of it: *The rod bloſſomed;* but what fruit followed the bloſſoms? wickedneſs, pride, and violence; awful fruits! Our Lord ſaith, *I am like a green firr-tree, from me is thy fruit found,* Hoſea xii. 8. Chriſtleſs ſinners can bring forth no fruit acceptable to God: it followeth not from a right principle, *viz.* from love to God; neither have they a right end in view, *viz.* the glory of God.—

They want Chriſt's image and ſuperſcription on them; and ſo will not paſs in the court of heaven. See how ſmall account the Lord makes of the duties of the wicked, Iſa. lxvi. 3. It is the ſweet-ſmelling ſavour of the ſacrifice of the ſlain Lamb of God that perfumes our perſons, our graces, our duties, and makes them aſcend with acceptance before the throne. Have ye ever ſeen the tranſcendent glory and beauty of our Lord Jeſus? If ye have, the ſight would humble you to the duſt. A ſight of Chriſt is a humbling ſight; for both the majeſty of God, and the mercy of God, is ſeen in Chriſt.

That the Lord may manifeſt himſelf to you, otherwiſe than he does to the world, is the deſire of your well-wiſher,

GREENOCK, April 1ſt, 1763. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXI.

TO JAMES MITCHELL, *a Chriſtian acquaintance.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

IT is long ſince I had a thought of writing to you. I am often indiſpoſed for any outward duty, by reaſon of my trouble. I live in a crazy tabernacle, which I often think is near its diſſolution; and I am heartily content that it ſhould be diſſolved, ſeeing our Lord Jeſus hath ſaid, *All that the Father hath given me, I have loſt none: and I will raiſe them up at the laſt day.*

Dear Brother, I deſire you would write me what hath been the iſſue of the exerciſe my ſiſter was under: the trees may bloſſom fairly in the ſpring, on which there may be no fruit in the harveſt. Some have ſharp ſoul-exerciſe, that are nothing but fore-taſtes of hell. I have known ſome, within theſe few years, that have

had ſharp convictions, but they are gone off again; they are as profane, and as careleſs about their ſalvation as ever; *whoſe laſt ſtate ſeems worſe than the firſt*, Matth. xii. 45. I have been aſtoniſhed what to think of theſe diſpenſations; only this I am perſuaded of, if they be elect veſſels, they will get another awakening. I remember, about 24 or 26 years ago; about that time, I ſay, the Lord bleſſed his own ordinances with convincing and converting power; to which, I ſuppoſe, ye was a witneſs as well as I: and, by the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, barren ſouls became a fruitful field, and made to bloſſom as the roſe. The garments of our glorious King Jeſus then ſmelled of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby we were made glad: the King was held in the galleries of his own ordinances, which made them to ſmell as a field which the Lord hath bleſſed. I was a witneſs to ſome that were ſhining lights, while they were in the Church militant, and they got a fair gale of the wind of the Spirit to blow them into the harbour of glory, who dated their converſion from that time: but alas! we have ſinned the Lord away from his ordinances, in a great meaſure. I am often grieved to ſee the little impreſſion of God that is upon the ſpirits of profeſſors, when they come from ordinances: their carnal ſpeech, and the ſhew of their countenances, declare they have not been with Jeſus.—But I inſiſt not on theſe things.

Dear Brother, I would obſerve unto you, another remarkable ſtep of the adorable condeſcendence, and free love of our God, on the laſt Saturday of March: my ſiſter had a child that died; it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer, to impreſs my mind with a concern for the child, and bear in on my ſpirit, Mal. iii. 7. *I will ſpare him as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him*: yet I was in the dark to know what was the mind of the Spirit of God concerning theſe words; only I got liberty in pleading that the Lord would ſpare him from

the curſe of a broken law; that his hand might be upon the man of his right-hand; and that he would glorify himſelf in the child's ſalvation: the child was in great diſtreſs, which ſometimes was like to pierce my heart; and theſe words often ſupported me, *This is all the fruit of the rod to take away ſin*, which filled my mouth often with new arguments; that by the Lord's bleſſing that might be the effect of the rod, to take away ſin. About an hour before his death, I got a glorious diſcovery of the love of God to him in theſe words, *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him*, Pſalm xci. 14. I got a wonderful view of that love of God, the firſt cauſe, and of its honourable egreſs through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But a ſudden objection was darted into my mind, what if all this be a deluſion; but behold the condeſcendence of our kind Lord, who ſweetly reproved me for my unbelief, and made my heart to melt before the fire of his love, from Deut. xxxii. 6, John xiv. 9. Think on the works the Lord hath done, which breed admiration. Reſts your Siſter,

GREENOCK, May 13. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I RECEIVED yours, dated April 6th, for which I deſire to bleſs the Lord for the accompliſhment of his true and faithful word, and for the ſanctified uſe of your trial: *The Lord hath been mindful of his grace and truth to the houſe of Iſrael.*—I had not an opportunity to write to you any ſooner. If my wicked heart do not deceive me, the love of God doth conſtrain me

to make mention of his loving-kindneſs: and, O that I could ſo do it as that he may get all the glory of it.

One night as I was in meditation, deſiring matter and direction from the Lord what I would write to you, ſeveral ſteps of the Lord's condeſcendency occurred to my mind, which I had never yet recorded, with that word, *Quench not the Spirit.*—The firſt was in the year 1757, a little before my trouble began. One night I was much perplexed with the fear of death: I thought the Lord had ſupported me in many trials, but that one ſtep, death, I had no experience of it. I might ſay as Joſhua ſaid to the children of Iſrael, *They had not paſſed that way before.* I was much diſtreſſed, till it pleaſed the Lord graciouſly to bear in upon my Spirit, with a ſweet refreſhing power, Pſalm xviii. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs.* Theſe words have often afforded me ſweet views of death, many a time ſince.——Another ſtep of the Lord's adorable condeſcendency that ſame year, in the reading of the ſcriptures, there ſhined ſuch a divine glory and wiſdom of God, as I never ſaw the like before: but whenever I cloſed the Bible, I loſt that ſweet impreſſion of God upon my ſpirit, which made me often long to have all things removed, that interrupted that ſweet communion and fellowſhip I had with God. And theſe words ran often in my mind, *His ſhoulders I took from the burdens; and freed his hands from the pots.* The Bible ever ſince, for the moſt part, hath been a ſealed book to me, as for my own reading of it.—Another remarkable ſtep of the Lord's loving-kindneſs; when my trouble firſt began, he bore in on my mind, Iſa. lx. 1. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is ariſen upon thee.* But inſtead of light, I thought I had much darkneſs: I could not ſee why the Lord was contending; I did not know the voice of the rod. I thought I might ſay with Job, *I was not eaſy, yet trouble came.* And one great part of my trouble was, that providence

ſeemed to contradict the accompliſhment of the promiſe: *I was ſo rude and ignorant, and as a beaſt before him.* I knew not that faith and patience was to be tried; and my unrenewed will was often unto me a battle: I could not win to ſubmiſſion to the will of God, which made me often cry to the Lord, that he would bring my rebellious will to ſubmiſſion to his holy will, and then let him do with me what ſeemeth him good, on purpoſe that he would glorify himſelf. Thoſe words were often borne in on my mind, Pſalm xxxvii. 4. *Delight thyſelf in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee the deſires of thine heart.* I could appeal to the ſearcher of hearts, that my heart's deſire was the enjoyment of my ſweet and lovely Jeſus: but, O I could not win to patience, to wait till it pleaſed him to put me into the poſſeſſion.

One day I looked upon Mr. Erſkine's ſermon, on that text, *I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.* I got my eye upon the apple of *contentment*, which groweth upon that bleſſed tree, and this filled me both with wonder and joy: I graſped greedily at it, as an hungry man at food. Contentment was what I ſtood much in need of; and I was glad it was in Chriſt to be found. Mr. Erſkine ſaith, "That the apple of the aſſurance "of the everlaſting love of God, or the apple of the "imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, are amongſt the "ſweeteſt apples that grow on this apple-tree:" but, at this time, to me none was ſo ſweet as the apple of contentment. Contentment is a plant that doth not grow in nature's garden. I have much reaſon to bleſs the Lord, for the contentment he hath brought me to: and I deſire ye would bleſs him alſo; *It is the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes.* I was very deſirous to know the mind of the Lord in the fore-cited Iſa. lx. 1. and ſome other parts of ſcripture I was in the dark about.—One time it pleaſed the Lord, when I was in meditation, wiſhing the great Interpreter, one

amongſt a thouſand, would teach me his mind from his own word; immediately thoſe other ſcriptures were borne in with ſome light and life, which I thought imported a call to ſome duty, *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven:* And, *Let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand.* Yet I never got ſuch a clear diſcovery of the mind of the Lord, concerning the duty, till the laſt year. By theſe two ſcriptures the mind of the Lord was laid more fully open; Rom. ix. 17. *Even for this purpoſe have I raiſed thee up;* John ix. 3. *That the works of God might be made manifeſt.* O wonderful, boundleſs free-love, that the Lord ſhould manifeſt ſo much of it to ſo vile a ſinner, and ſo uneloquent; and alſo call me to a manifeſtation of it. But herein ſhines the wiſdom of God, *That the excellency of the power may be ſeen to be of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure.* O adore and magnify the Lord, for his free-love; and let the friends of the glorious Bridegroom know of the Bridegroom's love to ſo vile a ſinner, that they may both love and praiſe him.—Let me have your welcome return. Reſts your Siſter, as formerly,

GREENOCK, June 17. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I HAVE been thinking of writing to you a ſubject that is ſo great and glorious, I am afraid I but darken counſel without knowledge: nevertheleſs, at my Lord's command, I deſire to launch out into the ocean of the grace and furniture that is in our glorious

Head, who *meeteth him that rejoiceth to work righteouſneſs, and remembereth him in all his ways.* I intend to give you ſome farther account of the Lord's way with me, about the time I wrote to you in my letter in January laſt. I am afraid I am ſo ignorant of my Lord's way with me, that I put want of preſence for want of poſſeſſion. I intend, as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt, to mention ſome ſcriptures that were made exceeding ſweet to my ſoul, and a few of my meditations upon them; together with ſome of the effects they had upon my ſoul, and leave the whole to your own judgment.

I would then further obſerve unto you, what took place, on the day mentioned in that letter. My ſweet communion and fellowſhip with God was firſt interrupted by a friend's coming in: it was ſo ſudden, that I thought I might ſay with Jacob, that *the Lord went up from me, in the very place where he talked with me.* A little before that time, the Lord had called me to a duty; the omitting of it gave me very much trouble in the views of approaching death: from which I was made to ſee, that the omitting of duty might give much diſturbance to a believer's conſcience at the hour of death, although their intereſt in Chriſt was very clear. After I got the duty performed, Oh! how ſweetly did the Spirit of God breath upon theſe ſcriptures, *This is your reaſonable ſervice!* This laid me in the duſt before a holy God, with ſhame and bluſhing, to think he ſhould look upon any thing done by ſo vile a ſinner: then that word came, *Ye are accepted in the Beloved;* and, *the Lord loveth a chearful giver.* During that ſore ſhock of trouble, Oh what ſweet matter of meditation was thoſe words to me, Exod. xxix. 42, 43. *I will meet with the children of Iſrael at the door of the tabernacle, and I will ſanctify the tabernacle of my glory!* O the raviſhing diſcovery I got of the Lord Jeſus, the true tabernacle, where God and man meeteth amicably together! There will I meet with them, and there will I ſpeak with them. He who is one with the Father,

is our way to the Father. O the raviſhing view I got of the divine perfections of God, ſhining glorioufly in the face of our Emmanuel, who is *the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon!*

Another ſcripture that afforded me ſweet ground of meditation was, Iſa. xlii. 1. *Behold my ſervant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth.* I was made to behold the matchleſs love of God; in putting that ſervice into the hand of his own Son: and alſo the love of the Son, who is co-equal, co-eſſential, and co-eternal with the Father, becoming the Father's ſervant, to ranſom and redeem us out of the hands of law and juſtice. I beheld him through his hard ſervice: Jacob ſerved for a wife, and for a wife Iſrael kept ſheep. I think the believer may ſay of our Lord, as Moſes' wife ſaid of Moſes, *A bloody huſband art thou unto me.* I beheld juſtice ſatisfied in him; and the love of God getting an honourable egreſs thro' Chriſt, towards the chief of ſinners. By theſe ſtreams I was led to the fountain-head, to behold the love of God from eternity, to me in Chriſt. O! what could I do but wonder at his love! This ſweet field will take a long eternity to travel through it.

Dear Brother, you was complaining of darkneſs: O come and ſee; come and drink; drink more abundantly: the nearer the fountain-head, the wine is the ſweeter.

Now, as to the effects theſe glorious diſcoveries had upon my ſoul, I think I am at a loſs, for want of words to clothe them with. My ſoul was ſet all in a flame of deſire for the full poſſeſſion: the infinite ſweetneſs of Chriſt, and the matchleſs glory of his perſon, ſo raviſhed my ſoul, that I would have been glad the eyes of my faith were never off this glorious object, till faith were ſwallowed up in viſion, and hope in fruition: then I ſhall ſee him as he is, and be ſatisfied with his likeneſs. At this time I thought that ten thouſand deaths would have been nothing to me to have had the

enjoyment of my Lord.—An acquaintance looking upon me ſaid, I never ſaw you ſo mortal like; and then fell a weeping: at the hearing of which I ſmilled for joy to hear of the ſymptoms of approaching death; and then ſaid, I am heartily content that my body go down to the duſt, for my Lord will raiſe it again a more glorious body.—I will tell you what the ſweet-ſmelling roſe of Sharon hath done for me. O his grace-giving garments ſendeth forth a ſweet ſmell: by his ſweet ſavour he hath perfumed a ſick-bed, he hath perfumed the grave, he hath unſtinged death. Glory to his name he hath done all things for me.—Another effect thoſe glorious diſcoveries had upon my ſoul, they diſcovered new wants; want of love to God, and want of holy reverential fear of God: *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.* I dare not ſay but my ſoul was filled with ſomething of a holy dread of God, which increaſed new fears of ſinning againſt him, and longing for conformity to God. I think the ſituation of my ſoul was like that which Dr. Owen ſpeaks of: he ſaith, "The ſoul overpowered by the "force of its own love, fainteth; being raiſed by a "ſenſe of Chriſt's love, rejoiceth."—O but theſe old bottles can hold little of the new wine of heaven: when they are made new, both will be preſerved together.

At this time that ſcripture was to me like a crowning of all the reſt, 2 Sam. i. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were loving and pleaſant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.* This was to me a ſweet repreſentation of Chriſt and the believer, of their pleaſant living together.—O bleſſed, bleſſed be God, that in their death they were not divided. *That which we have ſeen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowſhip with us; and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son, Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 John i. 3.

I received your two letters; for which I deſire to bleſs the Lord for your kindneſs to me, and for the

ſweet refreſhment my ſoul found in them, by the Spirit of the Lord breathing upon them.—I fevered ſince I began to write to you; and I have been very much afraid for the loſs of my reaſon, becauſe of the violent pain of my head, and the violent aſſaults of Satan: his fiery darts have been like to drink up my ſpirits. Let me have your ſympathy at the throne of grace, and the ſympathy of other friends. Grace and peace be with you,

GREENOCK, Sep. 18. 1765. MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Let me have your welcome return as ſoon as poſſible.

LETTER XXIV.

To Mr. J——s G——r, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I RECEIVED your letter on Saturday. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for your kindneſs; and the kindneſs of other friends to me, who am leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies; and do not deſerve the notice of any, far leſs the notice of him who is infinitely fairer than the ſons of men. I am unfit to ſpeak to your caſe; as I was enabled I laid it before him who hath the tongue of the learned, and ſpeaks a word in ſeaſon to a weary ſoul. What I think he ſaith to you ye may read in John xvi. 22. and Iſa. xxxv. 4. lvii. 18. Put him to his word; he loveth to be taken at it.

On Sabbath laſt I took a very great pain in my knees; it went to my heart, and occaſioned me to faint: I had ſome thought that it had been preſent death, till that word came, *The viſion is yet for an appointed time.* During that ſore ſhock, the ſweet ſenſe of the love of

God was withdrawing, which I enjoyed through the former part of the day, and this occaſioned me to take a new view of my charters to the inheritance, *viz.* the promiſes.

Since twelve o'clock on Sabbath evening, I have been eaſier of the pain, but continued ſick; and have had ſince a very ſweet impreſſion of the love of God on my ſoul.—I deſire both the prayers and praiſes of your congregation: pray for grace to enable me to glorify God in the furnace; and praiſe him for his truth and the kindneſs of his love.—I got a little breathing concerning your daughter; with that word, *Ethiopia ſhall ſoon ſtretch out her hand to God.* You muſt excuſe my ſhortneſs till the Lord give another opportunity. Remember me to friends in Chriſt. Reſts your Siſter in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Oct. 29. 1765. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXV.

TO JAMES MITCHELL, *a Chriſtian acquaintance.*

Dear and loving Friend,

IN anſwer to your deſire, all I intend through divine aſſiſtance is to mention a few remarks concerning the Lord's way with me through the wilderneſs. O that I could make mention of the loving-kindneſs of the Lord, ſo that he may get all the glory, and others be excited to love, praiſe, and adore him who *is altogether lovely.* I have been very diſtreſſed with trouble in my body, and alſo much aſſaulted by Satan, ſince I ſaw you: yet I have reaſon to ſay it to the praiſe of the Lord, it hath been my unſpeakable mercy to behold the rod in the hand of a loving Father; which view makes me to conclude there is nothing in my rod

but what is for his own glory and my good: this makes me ſweetly to acquieſce in his will, and to ſay, *The cup which my Father giveth me, ſhall I not drink it?*

I remember often, with grief, that in my younger years, I was much aſſaulted by Satan to queſtion my intereſt in Chriſt; and my unbelieving heart ſided with Satan in witneſſing againſt the work of the Spirit in my own ſoul. After many remarkable manifeſtations of his loving-kindneſs, I often acted as if God had been changed in his love when I was changed in my frame: I often believed his word no longer than the Spirit of God ſhined upon his own word. O the many wounds I have given glorious Chriſt by unbelief! This made me think, were it poſſible there could be ſorrow in heaven, for the ſin of unbelief, I would be grieved becauſe I have done ſo little for Chriſt upon the earth.

Satan hath now taken another way of aſſaulting, and that is to queſtion divine truths, and that immediately after I have found the ſweet and powerful influence of them upon my own ſoul. I have had little trouble about my ſtate for ſome years bygone. When challenges ariſeth from whatſoever quarter, I ſend them to glorious Chriſt who hath ſatisfied juſtice, and fulfilled the holy law: for I am perſuaded that God will not charge the debt both upon the Surety and upon the ſinner: no; *He is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake: he hath magnified the law and made it honourable.* It is the doing and dying of our Lord Jeſus that is the alone ground of my confidence before God, and acceptance with him; there my ſoul finds a ſweet reſt. If this be not the way that brings glory to God, and ſalvation to ſinners, I have nothing but blank paper for heaven.

Wedneſday was eight-days was a day with me of ſweet communion and fellowſhip with God: that was a ſavory word to me, John xx. 17. *I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father; unto my God, and your God.*

O but that is a ſweet and endearing relation.—I ſaw ſuch a ſight of that union betwixt the Father and the Son, and believers in him, *I in them, and they in me*, that I thought I would not have been behind, to have lived upon it to a long eternity. My ſoul is often breathing out one of three deſires, *viz.* O that I could glorify him; O that I could love him; O that I had my ſoul's fill of his ſweet love. But what gets my Lord of me, but empty wiſhes?—Give my kind reſpects to William Crawford and Elizabeth Gibſon. I charge them to help a divour to pay the debt of praiſe to our ſweet and lovely Lord Jeſus. Grace and peace from the Lord Jeſus be with you,

GREENOCK, Nov. 13. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. THOMAS CLARK, in *America*.

Reverend and worthy Sir,

IT hath been upon my heart to write unto you, for this and ſome other reaſons, *viz.* that I might have the help of your prayers and praiſes to God.—Sir, I was perſuaded, from ſcripture, that the Lord called you to the iſland where you now reſide.—I deſire to know if religion be growing in it, and if glorious Chriſt be received in it, as he is offered in the goſpel. I deſire to acknowledge it, to the praiſe of God, that when I have heard you and other miniſters preach Chriſt, I believed it was a true report ye gave of him; and by the grace of God I was enabled to acquieſce in him, as all my ſalvation and all my deſire: yet I may ſay of our Lord Jeſus, as the queen of Sheba ſaid of the wiſdom of Solomon, 2 Chron. ix. 6. The greatneſs of the acts of his loving-kindneſs, won-

derful condeſcendence, infinite ſweetneſs, raviſhing glory, and matchleſs excellencies, that I have found in Chriſt, theſe eight years of my affliction, the *one half of it hath not been told.* O but our Lord Jeſus is kind to priſoners: he was a priſoner himſelf; *He was taken from priſon and from judgment: who can declare his generation?* The ſweet embraces my ſoul hath got of him, by faith, many a time hath helped me to trace the ſtreams of divine love to their fountain-head, and to read my name amongſt the living in Jeruſalem. O bleſſed be God that I, wretched I, miſerable I, ſhould have been upon the heart of God before the foundation of the world was laid. Glory to God in the higheſt, for Chriſt and redeeming love through him. O! how does the wiſdom of God ſhine in his glorious plan of redemption! wonderful love! wonderful holineſs! wonderful power! wonderful juſtice! wonderful truth! O how bright does theſe glorious attributes and perfections of God ſhine in the perſon of our Emmanuel! My ſoul has been admitted to travel, by faith, in that ſweet field, with wonder and admiration, till my natural ſtrength was almoſt exhauſted, becauſe my narrow veſſel could hold ſo little of that infinite fulneſs. O but that hath been a ſweet word to me, Phil. iii. 20. *We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change our vile bodies, that they may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body:* then it will be made a ſtrong and ſpiritual body, and able to bear that eternal weight of glory that will be conferred on it at the appearance of Chriſt. Yet, in theſe ſweet hours I have been mentioning; Oh! how often has pride and ſelf, thoſe abominable rivals of King Jeſus, been attempting to de-throne him out of the heart, and to rob him of the glory of his grace! O to be delivered from ſin, and the inbeing of it.

Sometime after my trouble began, it pleaſed the Lord to breathe upon theſe words, Pſal. lxxii. 7. *In his days ſhall the righteous flouriſh: and abundance of*

peace ſo long as the ſun endureth. I muſt ſay, to the praiſe of God, that he has maintained abundant inward peace; a joy, and peace in believing; but a peace with a continual war. O how rare a ſeaſon is it, that I get peace from a deſperately wicked heart and a tempting devil? I long for the out-making of that word, *Thoſe Egyptians, whom ye have ſeen to-day, ye ſhall ſee no more.*—I am waiting for the ſalvation of God.

Sir, pray that the Lord may enable me to wait with patience, and that he may make me active for glorifying him upon the earth. O praiſe him for what he hath already done. I am perſuaded a tribute of praiſe is due to our ſweet and lovely Lord Jeſus from me, above many thouſands.—Sir, O pray for a reviving to the poor backſliding Church of Scotland. That the conſolations of the Holy Spirit may be multiplied unto you, is the deſire of your affectionate friend,

GREENOCK, Dec. 17. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXVII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow*.

Beloved Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

ALL I intend at preſent, thro' divine aſſiſtance, is a few obſervations concerning the Lord's way with me ſince the 8th of December laſt.—O that I could commend the Lord and his ways to others, who hath firſt commended his love to me. His amazing love, and aſtoniſhing condeſcendence hath been very wonderful unto me; *Extol the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together.*

On the foreſaid 8th of December, being the Sabbath day, I had a very unpleaſant morning, by reaſon of inward corruption. I could not get any nearneſs to

God, which is my life. Miſs M'Cunn aſked me what ſermon ſhe would read unto me: I deſired her to read that ſermon of Mr. Erſkine's, intitled, *The promiſing God a performing God.* What I had my eye unto, in that ſermon was, what the Lord had ſpoken concerning the *day of death:* when that day comes, he will do as he hath ſaid. It pleaſed the Lord to breath upon that ordinance; and made it very refreſhful to me, and I thought to her alſo; for ſhe ſaid, Mr. Erſkine's book was the ſweeteſt book to her, of all others, except the Bible.

After ſhe left me, I looked upon the laſt page of the ſermon, where there were many promiſes repeated. I rembered that there were but few of them, but what the Lord had made, ſometime or other, good to me: this remembrance filled my ſoul with unſpeakable joy. But while I looked upon them, I over-ſtretched my weak body ſo far, that the exquiſite pain went ſo piercingly to my heart, that I almoſt fainted. After a little recovery, thoſe two ſcriptures afforded me a ſweet compoſure, and a ſolid ground of meditation: *The feeble ſhall be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord; and the lame man ſhall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing.* All the private duties and ordinances I had the priviledge of enjoying that night, were very delightful to me, on account of the ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, I found in them.

About two in the morning. I got the moſt ſweet and ſoul-raviſhing diſcovery of glorious Chriſt, in ſome reſpects, that I ever ſaw in any former period of my life. O his garments ſmelled of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia.—The garment of his *righteouſneſs* is a ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour: it puts away the ſtinking ſavour of ſin.—The garment of his *graces* caſts a ſweet ſmell, when the wind of the Spirit bloweth upon them: *His name is as ointment poured forth.* The ſweet odour of his ointment filled the ſpiritual ſenſes of my ſoul with a ſweet and pleaſant perfume. Chriſt is the quin-

teſſence of all odoriferous ſmells; the perfection of beauties: *His mouth is moſt ſweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.*

For two weeks I ſlept little. Bleſſed be God who kept both my head and heart very compoſed: my thoughts were much enlarged in viewing the love of God, the ſpring of our redemption; the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the channel through which it is conveyed to us; his offices and endearing relations, the ground of our joy and conſolation. O what a beaſt am I, that can love him ſo little! I think the Lord makes me a demonſtration of the power and reality that is in religion. Parts of my ſkin are extremely ſore, like a burning fire; and it is a burden for me to lift up my own hand. Glory to him, that notwithſtanding of all this I never found a ſweeter compoſure of ſpirit: yea, he made me willing to bleſs him for the rod; to bleſs him, becauſe it was his good pleaſure to afflict me; and to bleſs him, becauſe he made me willing to bleſs him: *This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.* That ſaying of St. Paul's was a ſweet word to me, *For me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain.* I got two large views upon it: 1. The *vanity* of that gain which ſo many in the world ardently ſeek after, which leaves them comfortleſs in the day of death. 2. The *greatneſs* of that gain which they obtain who gain Chriſt: they live upon their gain thro' eternity, and live with their gain: their gain will be matter of eternal wonder and praiſe.

On the 25th of December, I was ſenſible of the with-drawing of the divine ſupport. Immediately I began to ſink under the preſſure of my trouble; and I was afraid of diſhonouring the Lord by diſcontentment. Glory to God he immediately ſupported me by thoſe ſcriptures, Heb. xii. 2. *Conſider him, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame:* Exod. xv. 23, 24, 25. Chriſt, the tree of life, and the tree of his croſs, ſweetens the bitter water of afflictions. By this I got new ſtrength and new

reſignation to the will of God. Upon which the two following obſervations occurred to my mind, 1. That without Chriſt I could do nothing: I ſaw I could not bear my trouble half an hour with contentment: I ſaw alſo, that *through Chriſt ſtrengthening me, I could do all things.* 2. I ſaw they were greatly to be pitied who had much affliction, and nothing of Chriſt to ſweeten them.

Dear friend, it is but a very little hint I can give you, of what the Lord made the ſweet ſubject of my meditation.—O that ye would praiſe him for his divine ſupport, to ſo vile a ſinner. Grace and peace be with you,

GREENOCK, Jan. 28. 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I received a line from your ſon; but have not been able to look over your letter ſince that time; therefore I cannot give you my ſentiments concerning what you propoſed: only this far, the principal thing I can ſee culpable in them, is your ſin of unbelief, which ye ſee yourſelf.—I long to know of your ſpiritual welfare; and alſo of Mrs. Glen's welfare, and if ſhe has attained to any more ſubmiſſion to the will of God, with reſpect to an outgate from her trouble. If ſhe be able I would be glad ſhe would favour me with a line.——Be ſo good as indulge me with a return,

Feb. 3d, 1766. } M. L.

LETTER XXVIII.

To ALEXANDER PARKER, my *Couſin.*

Dear and loving Couſin,

I OWE much reſpect to you, both by the tie of nature, grace, and gratitude. The greateſt kindneſs I think I can do unto you, if I could do it, is to commend unto you glorious Chriſt, and practical religion. If I, by the bleſſing of God, could be inſtrumental in encouraging you to run your race a little ſwifter, it would be the greateſt kindneſs I could do you: *Know you not, that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain,* 1 Cor. ix. 24. It is much for the comfort of runners to know that they are in the way: *Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life.* All who run in this way will, in the end, receive a crown of unfading glory, and the eternal embraces of him who is *altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thouſand.*

Couſin, permit me, at this time, to tender a few advices to you. And,

1. My firſt advice to you therefore is to be much in the duty of *ſelf-examination.* Indeed it is above the reach of either men or angels, to accompliſh a diligent ſearch of this kind, unleſs the ſearcher of hearts take the work in his own hand, and, by his ſearching, the light, leading, and guiding power of his word and Spirit, effectually go through it, ye will paſs a wrong ſentence on it, and put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs. O therefore let your eyes be towards the Lord for direction.

2. Be much in the duty of *ſpiritual meditation:* this is a duty the Lord very much countenances; *Thou meeteſt him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteouſneſs; thoſe that remember thee in thy ways,* Iſa. lxiv. 5. I

would commend this duty unto all, ſo far as my word would go, from the ſweet experience I have had of the Lord's giving much countenance unto it. Ye may have ſweet communion and fellowſhip with God in that duty, while you are employed about your lawful calling. God has a way of converſing with the believer, and the believer has a way of converſing with God, through Chriſt by faith: *My beloved ſpake unto me and ſaid, Riſe up my love, my fair one, and come away*, &c. And what is faith, but juſt the echo of the ſoul anſwering the word of grace? *Behold I come unto thee; for thou art the Lord my God.*

3. Treaſure up the *promiſes in your mind;* they are the feuel of faith: faith can as little act without the promiſe, as fire can burn without feuel: therefore let your mind be always like the pot in the ark, filled with the manna of the word. A promiſe, hid in the heart, may do you ſervice when you have neither acceſs to read nor to hear the word preached.

4. Meditate much *upon the promiſes;* they are the ſweeteſt lines in Chriſt's love-letter to his ſpouſe: majeſty appears in the command, and ſeverity in the threatening; but love and mercy predominates in the promiſe.

Dear Couſin, live a life of faith upon the Son of God. If ye be living by faith upon the Son of God, the glory of God will be the chief end of your life, and ye will have a continual conflict with ſelf, and how to get ſelf-ends mortified.—Alas! I ſee ſelf-ends creeping in on me in every duty: *The true circumciſion rejoices in Chriſt, having no confidence in the fleſh.* Senſe has its only foundation and confidence within; it treads in the ſhallow waters of created grace, experimental attainments, marks of grace, and the like: but faith has its foundation without the man, in Chriſt, in God's covenant, in the great and precious promiſes. Mr. Erſkine ſays, "It is a legal temper in believers, when their aſſurance is loſt by challenges. It may be the

man enjoys a ſweet meaſure of aſſurance; but behold a ſin prevaileth, and conſcience challengeth him: thereupon he razeth all. This is an evidence of a legal temper; contrary to that goſpel ſpirit ye may ſee acted in David, Pſal. lxv. 3. *Iniquity prevaileth againſt me;* it prevaileth againſt my heart and againſt my will; againſt my prayers, againſt my ſecret wreſtlings and groans, and againſt my reſolutions. Shall I thereupon raze the foundation of my faith? No; I will fly to the atoning blood of the Lamb of God to cleanſe and purge both from the guilt and power of ſin, and maintain my confidence in him: *As for our iniquities thou ſhalt purge them away.*

Couſin, are ye indeed engaged in the battle with the nations? Know for your encouragement, that the Lord your God will drive them out from before you by little and little. Put the nations in the hand of your captain to deſtroy them; and endeavour, in ſo doing, the daily exerciſe of faith and prayer. Pray for a reviving to the backſliding age ye live in.—That grace and peace may be with you, is the ſincere deſire of your Couſin,

GREENOCK, March 5. 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXIX.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Friend, and beloved of our Lord,

I RECEIVED your letter from your ſon. One part of it was very ſweet and refreſhful; the other part of it was very bitter: what of Chriſt that was in it, was ſweet to me; but to hear of the ſinnings of profeſſors, was exceeding bitter.

I have had the opportunity to ſee much of the

changeableneſs of the creature theſe eight years of my affliction. Mr. Brooks ſaith, "A ſummer friend I "value not; but a winter friend is worth his weight "of gold." I was thinking upon the changeableneſs of ſome of my acquaintances; and while I was employed in thinking upon them, Iſa. liv. 10. was brought to my mind: *But my loving-kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee; neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord.* There I got a manifold ſweeter view of the unchangeable love of God, than I could have got in all the creatures.

All I intend, at preſent, is to obſerve unto you a few of the aſtoniſhing acts of the loving-kindneſs of the Lord which are great and wonderful.

I would obſerve unto you, what took place when the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper was diſpenſed laſt at Crawfurd's-dyke. I deſire to ſpeak it to the praiſe of God, who *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* It pleaſed the Lord often to lay upon my Spirit a concern for a day of power, and of the Lord's preſence to miniſter's and people. Upon the Saturday that word ran in my mind, *Sanctify yourſelves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you,* Joſhua iii. 5. On the Sabbath, when I was eſſaying prayer, it was impreſſed on my mind, to plead that the Lord would breath upon that text of ſcripture Mr. Cock was then to preach upon. This put me to a ſtand; for I was afraid the impreſſion had come from Satan, who is very ſubtile, and ready to inject ſomething upon the mind to draw the heart off the object of worſhip. I reaſoned with myſelf, and ſaid, Why ſhould I limit the holy One of Iſrael to one part of his word beſides another? I then deſired that the Lord would ſhine upon that, or any other part of his word that was for his own glory. I was much enlarged in pleading to that purpoſe; and while I was pleading, Iſa. xxxii. 2. was brought to my mind, with ſuch ſingularity attending it, as really made me think it was

the text. A very large field occurred to me from it for meditation.—I only obſerve three particulars unto you.

1. I got a very ſweet and heart-affecting view of the MAN who is *a hiding-place from the wind*, and *a covert from the tempeſt*, taking the law-room of guilty ſinners, and windy tempeſt of God's wrath breaking upon the head of our glorious Surety, when Jehovah ordered the *ſword of juſtice to awake againſt the man that is God's Fellow, and ſmite the ſhepherd*, till the ſword of juſtice got ſatisfaction in his blood. Herein ſhines the manifold wiſdom of God in that glorious device of ſalvation.

2. I got a view of the *diſtreſſed condition* of the wretched ſinner, forced to Sinai, where God deſcendeth in all the awful circumſtances of his terrible majeſty, thunderings, and curſes: Gal. iii. 10. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.*

3. When Chriſt apprehends a ſinner by his Spirit, and enables them to apprehend him by faith, O with what pleaſure do they then ſit down under his ſhadow; the covert of his blood and righteouſneſs is a ſweet ſhadow. Many other things occurred to me, *viz.* What he is a ſhadow from, and what ſort of a ſhadow he is.—But I leave thoſe things to your own meditation.

I aſked one where Mr. Cock had his text; ſhe ſaid, Iſa. xxxii. 2. Then I was amazed at the condeſcending love of God, that condeſcendeth ſo very low, that before a poor priſoner want preaching, he will preach himſelf by his word and Spirit.

On another Sabbath, as I was looking on Iſa. xlii. 6. I was ſurprized with a raviſhing view both of the giver and the gift. *I*, the glorious Jehovah, ſpeaking to his eternal and well-beloved Son; *I will give thee for a covenant of the people.* Such power and ſweetneſs, light and life, did accompany thoſe words, which

made me often repeat theſe words over and over, *my life, my life,* till my ſtrength failed me, and my thoughts were almoſt ſwallowed up in wonder. I got leave to appropriate Chriſt to myſelf as my righteouſneſs, my wiſdom, and my ſtrength. In a word, I ſaw nothing but wants and imperfections in myſelf; but I ſaw all that I ſtood in need of in glorious Chriſt: and much of the day was ſpent in travelling betwixt his fulneſs and my emptineſs.—Glory to God in the higheſt, that Sabbath-days were never ſweeter to me, ſince I wanted public ordinances, than they were the laſt ſummer: ordinary Sabbaths were as high communion-days.

I deſire you, and other friends, would help a divour to pay the debt of praiſe to our ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord Jeſus.—O that I could, by the bleſſing of God, raiſe your eſteem of him higher who is the perfection of beauty: *His mouth is moſt ſweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.* My ſoul was ſo raviſhed with his beauty and matchleſs excellency, that the firſt ſight ever I ſaw of him I would gladly have gone to heaven with him.—That his conſolations may be multiplied unto you, is the deſire of your Siſter, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, April 10. 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I would count it a very great favour, if you would deſire any of your Chriſtian acquaintances, when they are coming to this place, to be ſo good as give a call, and converſe a little with me. I have been much refreſhed with ſome who have done ſo from your city. M. L.

LETTER XXX.

To JAMES WILSON, *my Brother-in-law.*

Loving and affectionate Brother,

ON the receipt of yours, I endeavoured to attend to the contents of it: And therein I perceived ſeveral things.

1. Ye ſay, "I would know if we be lovers of our Lord Jeſus." It is true; but I am not ſatisfied with ſo general an anſwer. If ye be lovers of God, your love to him is a fruit of his love to you; and you have been convinced of your natural emnity againſt him, and ſee that you could never have loved him, unleſs he had firſt manifeſted himſelf to you. Some ſpeak as if it were natural for them to love God: poor creatures, they never ſaw nor conſidered that they were born with a dagger of enmity in their heart againſt God. True lovers of God, have ſeen their want of love to God, and the ſtrength and power of their enmity againſt him; and have gotten it broken, in ſome meaſure, in a day of his power.

2. Ye ſay, "There are two ſorts of ſons of God; "the one by generation, the other by adoption." I know none that are the ſons of God by *generation*, but his beloved Son, by eternal and ineffable generation, who is co-equal, co-eſſential, and co-eternal with the Father, Iſa. liii. 8. *Who ſhall declare his generation.*

3. Ye ſay, "I bleſs him that he died for ſuch ſin-"ners of Adam's family, ſuch as ye are." I deſire ye would beware of a general faith, condemned by our national covenant, as a branch of popery. A general perſuaſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, and of his willingneſs and ability to ſave ſinners, will not do the buſineſs.

I would aſk you how the ſaints come to get the

knowledge of the love of God? I anſwer, they get it by believing his love to them in Chriſt, with application to themſelves; 1 John iv. 16. *We have known the Father, and believed the love of God to us.* Divine love acts freely; God dwells not with us upon any terms conditionally; nor valuable conſiderations in us. We can neither beg heaven, nor buy it; it muſt be given us: therefore let not the greateſt civiliſt preſume, nor the greateſt ſinner deſpair: God's love is firſt on the field; dark threatening providences are attended with bringing his people's ſins to remembrance; as you may ſee, 1 Kings xvii. 18. *And ſhe ſaid, Art thou come to ſlay my ſon, and bring my ſin to remembrance.* Hath the Lord, by the death of your children, and the rod upon yourſelf, been bringing your ſins to remembrance? hath he been diſcovering to you your wicked heart, and polluted nature? and been telling you all things that ever you did, and thereby diſcovered to you the abſolute need ye have of Chriſt? The convictions of the Spirit are humbling, and tend to make the ſoul deſpair of help in itſelf, or in God out of Chriſt: but the temptations of Satan tend to make the ſoul deſpair of hope in Chriſt, or in God through him. The former ſhuts the door of acceſs by the law, but Satan would ſhut the door of acceſs by the goſpel.

I would have you carefully diſtinguiſh betwixt your warrant to believe, and power to believe; your right and warrant to believe is grounded on the goſpel-offer: the promiſes, together with God's commanding you to believe, conſtitute your warrant to believe, and make unbelief your ſin: but power to believe, is from the Spirit of God, in his ſaving operations.—O therefore cry to God, for the powerful operations of the Spirit to accompany the diſpenſations of the word.

I underſtand you have been perplexed about the meaning of ſome ſcriptures: perhaps you know not well whether they came by the Spirit of God, or from Satan. I will give you a note of Mr. Erſkine's upon

that head; he ſaith, "A word that cometh from Satan bears Satan's image, which is pride and unholineſs, and tendeth to make a man proud and carnal. But a word from God, bears God's image, and maketh a man holy and humble." He further ſaith, "A promiſe of the Lord is always a glaſs wherein the glory of the Lord appeareth, whereby the ſoul is changed from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." Whatever your burdens are, caſt your burdens upon the burden-bearer of Iſrael, and he will bear you and your burden both. Caſt yourſelf over upon him, and your family upon him, and all that concerns you, either for time or eternity; and he will make a good account of all that is committed to him.—That the Lord may enable you, by his grace, ſo to do, is the deſire of your Siſter,

GREENOCK, May 16. 1765. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Dear and loving Siſter, be frequently pleading the promiſes in prayer: the promiſes are God's bond; and God's bond is to be purſued in the court of grace, at the throne of grace. *For theſe things will I be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael.* This was David's way; *Lord remember the word on which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.*

Yours, &c.

M. L.

LETTER XXXI.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I KNOW not how ſoon the Lord may finiſh his work with me, and cut it ſhort in righteouſneſs. That hath been a very ſweet word to me ſince I ſaw you, Heb. x. 37. *For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.* O pray, that the Lord may enable me to ſpend that *little while* to his glory.—O that time would fly away, that eternity would come: then farewel faith, and welcome viſion; farewel hope, and welcome fruition; farewel grace, and welcome glory; farewel partial communion with God, and welcome uninterrupted and everlaſting communion with my God.

I was ill for ſome weeks after you was here: I was ſeized with ſuch a ſleepy condition, that I could do nothing but cry for life from the life-giving God. O for activity to glorify him. I found the ſweet and great advantage of having one at the Father's right-hand, whom I could confidently truſt, with all that concerned me.

I intend to give you a little account of what was the ſubject of my meditation on the firſt day of May laſt. I intend to do it in the order it occurred to me. It hath been the Lord's way with me, under my trouble, often to give me a new meal upon old experiences; and ordinarily, when he doth ſo, he diſcovers ſome ſecret purpoſes I ſaw not before. I think the Lord is ſtill making out that truth to a believer, which he ſpoke to Peter, *What I do now, thou knoweſt not: but thou ſhalt know hereafter.* On the foreſaid day I was led to take a view of my wicked heart, and pollutted nature, in the glaſs of the holy law of God: when I view my-

ſelf there, O but my face looks foul; every ſtep of my life fills me with abhorrence; and makes me cry, *Unclean, unclean:* but the ſin of unbelief appeared to be the head and ſhoulders higher than all the reſt.—O but a view of the love of God, and the enmity of my own heart, is matter of wonder.

Upon the back of this, the Lord brought to my remembrance a very pleaſant and refreſhing view of the ſweet and glorious days I had in hearing the goſpel in Crawfurd's-dyke, from the year 1753, to the end of 1757. O the light, life, and power that then accompanied the goſpel! The ſails of my ſoul were often filled with ſo much of the wind of joy, that I would have been in danger of being overſet, had not many other weights, that lay heavy upon my ſpirit, counterbalanced my joy. One of theſe three lay heavy upon my ſpirit, *viz.* either the caſe of the Church, or the caſe of the congregation, or ſome of my near relations. For of a truth, zeal for the glory of God never burnt hotter than when he admitted me neareſt to himſelf.—The glorious manifeſtation of the love of God in Chriſt, often influenced me to embrace the Lord as all my ſalvation and all my deſire; and to give myſelf away to him, without any known guile. The Lord is my witneſs, my conſcience is witneſs, the timber and walls of that houſe are witneſſes, to the many ſweet days I have had in it, although much of the ſcum of corruption hath caſt up ſince that time. I dare appeal to the ſearcher of hearts, I never rued the bargain: No, no. I would not take my word again for a thouſand worlds.—I ſaw glorious Chriſt, and the fulneſs of God in him, to be ſuch a ſoul-enriching portion, that I often reſolved, through his grace, to be content with him for my portion, and with any lot he was pleaſed to carve out for me in the world, however diſtreſſing.

No ſin was I influenced to reſolve againſt more than the ſin of diſcontentment; the Lord knew that this was the ſide I was to be moſt tried at.—At this time

Satan ſet ſore upon me, and tempted to envy the proſperity of others; a ſin oppoſite to the holy law of God, which requireth full contentment. I was made to ſay upon the matter, but in another ſenſe, as Haman ſaid of Mordecai, Eſther v. 13. *What doth it avail me, while Mordecai ſits at the king's gate?* I was made to ſay upon the matter, What would worldly riches or honours avail me, while I want conformity to God's law; and while my corruptions are in the gate of king Jeſus coming into my heart? What would it avail me, to poſſeſs all ſublunary enjoyments, in the moſt affluent manner, while theſe uneaſy thorns of corruption remain? The ſweet and ſoul-reviving diſcoveries that I had got of glorious Chriſt, *The brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, and all the perfections of God ſhining glorioufly in him; theſe glorious ſights, I ſay, much darkened all created glories to me: thereby the power of that temptation was broken.—O that thoſe things may excite you, and other friends, to praiſe and thankfulneſs to God for his abundant grace to me, the chief of ſinners. That grace and truth may be with you, is the deſire of your friend,

GREENOCK, June 10. 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXXII.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paiſley*.

Dear and loving Couſin,

YOUR letter, dated July 10th, came to hand. You aſk me that queſtion our Lord aſked the Phariſees, Matth. xxii. 42. *What think ye of Chriſt?* It is very little I can either ſpeak or think of him. O for the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the know-

ledge of Chriſt! As we may expect to be examined and catechiſed by God, with reſpect to our thoughts, as well as our actions; ſo eſpecially of our thoughts concerning Chriſt: and as God will judge and try us by our thoughts, ſo we ought to judge and try ourſelves by this rule: for, *as our thoughts are, ſo are we*, Prov. xxiii. 7. Yea, God's thoughts of us are according as our thoughts are of Chriſt; if we think nothing of Chriſt, God thinks nothing of us: if we think highly of Chriſt, God thinks highly of us in him. God's thoughts of Chriſt are very high and honourable: he is the darling of his Father's delight, Iſa. xlii. 1. Woes me that I can think ſo little of Chriſt the anointed of God! *God hath anointed him with the oil of joy above his fellows.* Altho' I can think little or nothing of Chriſt, to his praiſe I deſire to ſpeak it, I have ſometimes got ſuch a manifeſtation of his glory, and ſuch a ſmell of his ointment, that the ſweet odour thereof filled my ſoul; and the ſweet perfume of it had an abiding impreſſion for ſome days. O his name ſmelled of heaven: *Becauſe of the good ſavour of his ointment, his name was as ointment poured forth.*—O! his garments ſmelled of heaven; all *his garments ſmelled of aloes, myrrh, and caſſia, out of the ivory palaces.* The garment of his righteouſneſs is a ſacrifice of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour unto God; the ſweet perfume thereof puts away the ſtinking ſmell of ſin. The garment of his graces caſteth forth a ſweet ſmell, when the wind of the Spirit bloweth upon them: when the north and ſouth wind awaketh, the ſpices ſendeth forth a pleaſant ſmell: *He is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thouſand: his head is as the moſt fine gold; his countenance is as Lebanon; more excellent than the cedars: his mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.*

You aſk me what I think of Chriſt's *ſufferings in the garden* and *on the croſs*. I think we act not faith far enough for redemdtion, unleſs we follow Chriſt from the croſs to the bar of God's juſtice court in heaven,

to ſee all ſealed and ſecured within the vail, where his blood is expoſed, as it were, to plead at the bar, where mercy and juſtice both meet together, and embrace each other.—What views have you got of the glory of God ſhining in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and of thoſe attributes of God meeting and embracing each other in him? Have you ſeen the glory, and felt the virtue of this happy meeting? Have you ſeen the *glory* of it? When once a day you had ſeen the attributes of God in arms againſt you, becauſe of your ſin and rebellion againſt him; when you ſaw the truth of God ready pronouncing the ſentence of the law, and his righteneſs and juſtice ready to execute the ſentence, and to inflict the ſame with curſes and vengeance, that you deſpaired of mercy, that you give up all expectation of peace with God, by the works of the law; have you thereupon, I ſay, got a view of the harmonious meeting of the divine attributes of God in Chriſt Jeſus, as the Surety, the Sacrifice, the Ranſom, the Propitiation, wherein the truth and veracity of God is accompliſhed; righteouſneſs and juſtice ſatisfied; that ſo mercy and peace might vent glorioufly, without the leaſt detriment to any of the excellencies and perfections of God? The more clear views you have of this happy and glorious meeting, the more ſtability in the faith.—What is your reaſon for deſiring the Spirit, eſpecially at the hour of death? Is it for that end that you may be enabled to glorify God thereby? The glory of God ſhould be our chief end in every thing. And what is the chief end of God? It is even that he may glorify himſelf in all his perfections, and enjoy himſelf for ever? And how doth God moſt brightly glorify himſelf? It is in Chriſt, the meeting-place of theſe perfections, with a view to our redemption, to the higheſt praiſe and glory of his grace, whereby *he hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6.

By reaſon of my preſent diſtreſs, I muſt break off.

Let me have the help of your prayers, with others of your acquaintances. Reſts your affectionate Couſin,

GREENOCK, Oct. 6th, 1766. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXXIII.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Loving and affectionate Brother in Chriſt,

I RECEIVED your letter, dated the 2d of Auguſt. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for the ſweet refreſhing I found in it, and for your kindneſs unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of the Lord's mercies.—O what am I, or what is my Father's houſe, that hitherto the Lord hath helped me? ——That day I heard of Mrs. Ewing's falling before the temptation; a ſin againſt the very light of nature, and law of God, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, Exod. xx. 13. I was ſore grieved: deaths of that nature have been very ſhocking unto me; until the Lord brought to my remembrance the many great deliverances he had wrought for myſelf, which was matter for a ſong of praiſe to my great deliverer. I had no intent to write any more of that temptation, having written thereof before; but I am conſtrained to it by theſe words, *Strengthen thy brethren;* and *Quench not the Spirit*. All I intend is to mention a few of theſe deliverances; and, O that you and all that heard thereof may be excited to a ſong of praiſe to God, and encouraged to ſet your hope in him, who never ſuffered me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear. Glory to his name.

About the end of September 1741, I was much afraid I had committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt: then Satan tempted me to put an end to my miſerable life; he often preſented inſtruments for that purpoſe,

which made me to tremble. Then the Lord ſaid to me, *Fear not, I have the keys of hell and of death*, Rev. i. 18. That week I heard Mr. Ballantine preach: at the cloſe of his ſermon, he offered Chriſt to every man and woman on this ſide of hell. The offer was very ſuitable to my caſe; my neceſſity was ſo great, I muſt not ſtand doubting whether I had committed the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt or not: I muſt have Chriſt, or I ſhall periſh without him.—And over all the oppoſition I was made to ſay, *Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

By the long experience I had of that temptation, I obſerved there was always ſomething in my diſpoſition Satan ſuited the temptation unto: he alſo made uſe of motives to perſuade me to it, and fall in with it; as may be obſerved in his temptations to our Lord in the 4th of Matthew. It was my ſinful unbelieving way to miſtruſt the power and faithfulneſs of God; and ſo I was often in fear of falling. And this was the motive Satan made longeſt uſe of, *viz.* that the longer I continued a profeſſor of religion, I would diſhonour God the more at the end of it. O what could be more grieving to me than the thoughts of diſhonouring God! for often the Lord kept in my view the great diſhonour the committing that ſin would be unto him: and to his praiſe I have cauſe to ſpeak it, that the more Satan tempted me to diſhonour God, he made zeal for his own glory to burn the hotter; which made me often anſwer Satan to this purpoſe, "Shall I thus diſhonour "the Lord? Shall I grieve the ſpirits of his people? "*Shall I commit this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt* "*God?* No, no: through his grace I never will." Yet my reſolutions were accompanied with ſo much fear, as made me often look to my once tempted, but now exalted Lord, with the tear in my eye, and ſay, *Lord, make thy grace ſufficient for me?*

One evening, as I was upon the ſtreet, Satan violently aſſaulted me to go into the ſea and drown my-

ſelf; it would be the eaſieſt death. Such a fear of Satan then fell upon me, as made my joints to ſhake, ſo that it was much for me to walk home; and when I came to the door, I found nobody within: I was afraid to go into the houſe leſt Satan ſhould get power over me. When thus perplexed, then that ſweet word came, Pſalm cxxi. 8. *The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for ever more.*—In the firm faith of this, I entered the houſe, ſhut the door, and went to my knees. I got very near acceſs to God, which was always my relief.

One day, a day very remarkable for communion and fellowſhip with God, when employed about my lawful calling, as I was in a room, with a knife in my hand, Satan made a new aſſault, to put a period to my life. O bleſſed be the Lord, who helped me above the feat of Satan: I anſwered him, "Be it known unto thee, "O thou reſtleſs enemy, that *in God my glory is placed,* "*and my ſalvation is ſure.*" On the Sabbath day following, it pleaſed the Lord to draw aſide the vail, and give me a glimpſe of the glory of the whole Trinity: ſo exceeding great, and ſoul-raviſhing was the glory of God, that ſhined in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, that I was ſo far ſwallowed up in beholding that divine glory, that nature was much waſted. I had a ſweet impreſſion of that glorious ſight until the next Sabbath morning: then my Beloved was gone; and my heart, that is a magazine of hell, where corruptions lie like a barrel of gun-powder, ready to take fire with every ſpark of temptation, when blown up by helliſh injections from Satan, into ſuch a flame that I was affrighted at the ſight, and abhorred myſelf, that ever ſuch unbecoming thoughts of God ſhould come into my mind. I then aroſe and went to duties, to ſeek the Lord; but I found him not. Then I went to the public ordinances, where I found him the day before; but I found him not there. I wiſt not then what to do, nor where to find him: then I remembered that the diſciples went

to the place where Jeſus was wont to reſort; I then went to a ſecret place where I had found him ſometimes before: by this time I had loſt the ſweet and lively impreſſions of a reconciled God in Chriſt; and the awful majeſty of God made me afraid to approach unto him in prayer. I ſat down aſtoniſhed; I was greatly diſtreſſed by the hell of corruption that was within: then Satan came with his old temptation, and repreſented the water in the place. The motive he made uſe of was, that by putting an end to my own life, I would get an end of ſin. The Lord then ſeaſonably appeared for my help, and ſaid unto me, *He that endureth to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved*, Matth. xxiv. 13. O Sirs, when our ſweet and lovely Lord Jeſus comes to a poor ſinner, O what a train of bleſſings he brings along with him! He rebuked the devil; he rebuked a raging ſea of corruption; he commanded a peace in my ſoul; *He put a new ſong in my mouth, even praiſes to our God.*—That the God of peace, who ſhall bruiſe Satan ſhortly under our feet, may be with you, and all the Iſrael of God, is the deſire of your Siſter, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Nov. 11. 1766. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I wrote you ſome ſmall hints of the ſanctified effects of thoſe temptations, by the Lord's bleſſing upon them. I have ſeen them to be wiſely ordered of God for the reaſons mentioned in my letter of January 7th, 1764.—The two Sabbaths, mentioned above, Mr. Cock preached on Pſal. lvii. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God; be merciful unto me; becauſe my ſoul truſteth in thee: yea, in the ſhadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until theſe calamities be overpaſt.*

LETTER XXXIV.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Loving and affectionate Brother in Chriſt,

I WAS refreſhed by your two letters. O that I could bleſs God for the opening up of the fountain of the great depth of his everlaſting love, and for the revelation of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.—By reaſon of my diſtreſſed and weak condition, I am very unable to ſpeak to you, though my friend is very willing to write what I ſay. I am waiting a call from the Lord to be gone. Pray the Lord, that he may enable me to honour him while in life, and at death. All I intend, at preſent, if the Lord enable to it, is to give you a ſmall hint of what is moſt remarkable in my exerciſe, ſince I laſt wrote you. I have had ſome violent aſſaults from Satan; and the low caſe of Zion at this day lies alſo heavy upon my ſpirit: the cauſe that is down, will not abide down: *When the Lord ſhall build up Zion, he ſhall appear in his glory*, Pſalm cii. 16.

One day I was in a difficulty about a duty I was engaged in: I wiſt not how to manage it, either to the glory of God or the edification of others. I went to the Lord by prayer, for direction; and that ſcripture came to mind, James i. 5. *If any of you lake wiſdom, let him aſk it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* I was enlarged in pleading the outmaking of it; and got ſomething of a view both of the faithfulneſs of God, and of his boundleſs liberality: *And will not your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk it of him?* Luke xi. 13. I was ſuddenly aſſaulted by Satan with that temptation, Where is it ſaid in all the ſcriptures, *Let a* WOMAN *aſk wiſdom of God?* I wiſt not how to anſwer the enemy, for I did not mind a ſcripture that read that way: with

difficulty I intended to hold faſt my perſuaſion, I had formerly attained unto. I believed that woman ſinned in Adam, and fell with him in his firſt tranſgreſſion: I believe alſo, that the way of their recovery out of that miſerable ſtate is by the ſecond Adam, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom *God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God*, Rom. iii. 25.; notwithſtanding I got not my mind fully releaved, till it pleaſed the Lord, in his free love and adorable ſovereignty, to bear in thoſe words with a ſweet refreſhing power, light, and life accompanying them; *He who ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up to the death for* US ALL, *how ſhall he not with him freely give* US ALL *things?* and, *All are yours, and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's*, Rom. viii. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 23.—With theſe many *all things* that God giveth with Chriſt, I ſaw that God giveth wiſdom alſo.

The laſt day of December was a very remarkable day with me, for much ſweet communion and fellowſhip with God in Chriſt.—In the moring I was very diſtreſſed, and found ſome reluctance prevailing with me at my preſent affliction. This is an evil, that, by the grace of God, I deſire to keep a watchful eye upon. I cryed to the Lord that he would enable me to drink the cup he hath given me to drink, not by conſtraint, but with ſubmiſſion to his holy will: for I am perſuaded infinite wiſdom is at the mixing my cup; and infinite power ſupports and upholds me under it. Faith's views of the rod, in the hand of a loving Father, in the hand of the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; this, I ſay, ſweetens a bitter cup: that ſweet word was borne in, John xx. 17. *I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God.* Such a ſweet ſenſe of the love of God accompanied them, as ſwallowed up almoſt the ſenſe of the preſent trouble. Bleſſings for ever flow upon thy head, O

Emmanuel: the bleſſing of them that were ready to periſh be upon thee. Alas! for my narrow thoughts of him, and his boundleſs love: my narrow veſſel can take in little of the divine glory. It is a ſaying of Rutherfoord's, "It is glory that will make our veſſels "tight." When but a dark view through the glaſs of the promiſes of ſome of the perfections of God, fills the ſoul, ſo that nature is like to be exhauſted, O what need do I ſee for glorious Chriſt to change this vile body, and to faſhion it like unto his glorious body? Then I will be made meet to behold all the divine perfections of God ſhining glorioufly in the perſon of the God-man, *The brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* Well may his name be called, *Wonderful*, in whom all the divine perfections meet.

On that remarkable day, I had occaſion to ſpeak to ſome friends that viſited me; but I found it a difficulty to ſpeak to them by reaſon of weakneſs: I deſired them to join with me in prayer and praiſes to God for the revelation of his well-beloved Son, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—After eight o'clock at night, the ſweet ſenſe of the love of God was much abated. Sometimes it hath been the caſe with me, when my ſweet and altogether-lovely Lord goes away, he leaves behind him ſuch a ſenſe of the want of his preſence, and ſuch vehement deſires of ſoul after him, that a whole creation could neither eaſe nor pleaſe my ſoul till he came again! This made me often think, that by the grace of God I would rather be in a fiery furnace, with Chriſt's gracious preſence, than in health without him. The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you,

GREENOCK, Feb. 24. 1767. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Dear friend, I have not been able to write to you what I intended, by reaſon of my weak and diſtreſſed condition. I deſire your prayers to God;

with the prayers of other friends, for the uſe of reaſon and ſpeech; and that the Lord may enable me to glorify him therewith. Give my kind reſpects to Mrs. Glen, and other friends: let me have your favourable returns, if it pleaſe the Lord to continue me in the body. M. L.

LETTER XXXV.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Siſter, in our Lord Jeſus, and companion in affliction,

IT hath been my deſire and prayer to God, for a word from himſelf, to ſpeak unto you; and while I was aſking it, theſe two ſcriptures were borne in upon my mind, Pſalm xlvi. 5. *God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved; God ſhall help her, and that right early:* with Iſa xl 1, 2. *Comfort ye my people, ſaith your God; ſpeak comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her, that her warefare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned; for ſhe hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her ſins.* Your warefare is accompliſhed in your glorious Head and Huſband, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and he will ſee to the actual accompliſhment of it, in all his members: *They ſhall be more than conquerors, through him that loved them.* Think ye not but that a good day is worth the waiting for? The day of your death will be a better day than the day of your birth; a day in which all ſorrow will be ſwallowed up of joy; all darkneſs will be ſwallowed up of light: *The Lord will* then *be your everlaſting light; and the days of your mourning ſhall be ended.*

I remember ye ſay in your letter, that ye would look on it as a token for good, if any of the Lord's people got liberty on your behalf. Though the Lord, in his free love and adorable ſovereignty, be pleaſed to

give liberty, and the promiſe both on our behalf, I think your chief comfort lies not ſo much in that, as in your acting faith on Chriſt, and on the abſolute promiſes; and going out of yourſelf into Chriſt for all you want: *This is the reſt, and this is the refreſhing, wherewith he cauſes the weary to reſt.* When the ancker of the ſoul is fixed upon Chriſt within the vail, let ſtorms of trouble blow from heaven, earth, or hell, the ſoul will have matter of a ſong.—Some years ago, I was in meditation to this purpoſe, What might be the Lord's deſign in lengthening out my rod ſo long? Immediately that ſcripture was borne in on my mind, Iſa. lxvi. 5. *Let the Lord be glorified; but he ſhall appear to your joy.* That view occurred to me from the words, as if the Lord had ſaid, "Let me glorify my "wiſdom in ordering your rod for a while; let me "glorify my power in upholding you under the rod; "let me glorify my truth and faithfulneſs, in perform-"ing all the good I have promiſed you; and I will "appear to your joy." My heart replied, *Lord, do as thou haſt ſaid.* I am waiting for that joyful appearance; and I am ſure I will not be diſappointed, for he hath ſaid, *There ſhall be an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off.*—Now, that the God of hope, may fill you with all joy and peace in believing, is the deſire of your affectionate Siſter, and ſoul's well-wiſher,

GREENOCK, March 24. 1767. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. THOMAS CLARK, in *America.*

Reverend and worthy Sir,

I RECEIVED your letter, dated December 7th in February. — I remember, Sir, a little after you went from this place, I was informed you were in

ſtrait betwixt accepting a congregation in the North, and going to America. As the Lord enabled me, I went to him by prayer, and laid the matter before him, earneſtly deſiring that he would direct you to that part of his vineyard, that was moſt for his own glory. As for that congregation in the North, I got neither liberty nor light to pray for your going there: but I was enlarged in pleading for your going to America; and thoſe ſcriptures were borne in with ſome power and life, Acts xx. 22. *And now behold I go bound in the Spirit to Jeruſalem;* with Iſa. xlii. 4. *And the iſles ſhall wait for his law.* The views that occurred to me from theſe words were to this purpoſe: I was made to think that ye were to go bound in the Spirit to America; and that the people there waited for his law, or would wait for it. And while I pleaded for a bleſſing on the means of grace beſtowed upon them, that other ſcripture was borne in on my mind, Pſalm cv. 24. *And he increaſed his people greatly.*

As for Marion Orr, I have cauſe to be aſhamed before the Lord, that I have been ſo little concerned about her. I remember among the laſt times I ſpoke with her, that ſhe had any thing of reaſon, ſhe deſired me to plead the out-making of that promiſe for her, Heb. ix. 14. *Now the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot unto God, purge your conſcience from dead works, to ſeve the living God.* She ſaid to me, "Go home, and go to your knees, "and lay down a lump of hell at Chriſt's feet, and "plead that he may ſprinkle my conſcience with the "blood of infinite value; or elſe I am eternally un-"done." I eſſayed prayer on her behalf; and it pleaſed the glorious hearer of prayer to bear in with a freſh gale of the Holy Spirit, Iſa. liv. 8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy upon thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

As for my own caſe I know not well what to ſay of

it; I am afraid, and am aſſured of it, that I live not ſuitable to the favours and privileges I receive from God, and to the relation I ſtand in unto him, and he unto me, as being my God in Chriſt Jeſus, and Redeemer, both by price and by power: I am not my own, but bought with a price; therefore I ought to glorify God in my ſoul and body, which are his.—I do not live ſuitably to him as my *Head*. God in Chriſt is the believer's Head; and ſo to live as a member of ſuch a Head is to draw ſpiritual virtue, light, life, and comfort from the Head.—Neither have I lived ſuitably to him as my *Huſband: Thy maker is thy Huſband*. To live ſuitably to him in this relation is to live reverently, lovingly, with ſubmiſſion and ſubjection to him, as becometh the ſpouſe of ſuch a glorious Huſband. O to know more of this divine life, a living unto God!—I have cauſe to be aſhamed and confounded, becauſe of my ingratitude to him.

Dear Sir, pray that the Lord may enable me to honour him in life, and to honour him at death.—That the grace of our Lord Jeſus may be with you, is the deſire of your friend,

GREENOCK, April 15. 1767. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXXVII.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I RECEIVED your letter, and was much refreſhed by it.—I have been much ſtraitned in the duty of prayer: I am ſtraitned to apprehend the nature of the immediate viſion of God's face; or of the man Chriſt Jeſus, as to his human nature, how it is united to the divine. Surely, *I am more brutiſh than any man, and*

have not the underſtanding of a man, Prov. xxx. 2. I mean, heart-melting, refreſhing, and ſtrengthening views of Chriſt and his glory; of his nature and offices. O to be with Jeſus! Many a heavenly leſſon he teacheth. O to be his diſciple! He hath the words of eternal life. He allows me to claim my intereſt in him: *Thou art my hiding-place; thou ſhalt keep me free from trouble; and compaſs me about with ſongs of deliverance.* There is no fear of the law: glory to God that it took hold of our Surety, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: it would not let him go till he had paid the utmoſt farthing of debt due by an elect world. *His head was wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night.*

On the Sabbath-day laſt, I was converſing with a woman upon old experiences. The Lord brought to my mind two ſcriptures that were formerly refreſhing to me, and made them again a ſweet feaſt to my ſoul to feed upon. The two ſcriptures were, 1 Cor. iii. 23. *All are yours; and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's:* and, *What can David ſay more?* 2 Sam. vii. 20. I have longed much to be with himſelf, that I may ſee the immediate viſion and glory above. O to attain to a large meaſure of the grace of humility; it makes a very beautiful perſon: it is part of Chriſt's rob wherewith he adorns the elect; and it caſts a luſtre on all his attributes, and other works. *Know ye not, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope?* Rom. v. 4. That hath been a ſweet word, and a ſtrengthening one to my ſoul, *Looking for that bleſſed hope, and glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, Titus i. 13. *God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love, which ye have ſhown towards the ſaints*, Heb. vi. 10. *What am I, or what is my Father's houſe?* I am not worth the notice of any, and far leſs worth his noticing who is high and infinitely holy, who inhabiteth eternity. But what think ye of the manifold wiſdom of God? My ſoul deſireth to look with wonder at it.—That the

grace of our Lord Jeſus may be with you, is the deſire of your Siſter, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Jan. 1ſt, 1768. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Siſter, in our Lord Jeſus,

WE cannot want any of the ſweet, nor yet of the bitter things that are in our lot; they contribute to make up a mixed ſong: *I will ſing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I ſing*, Pſal. ci. 1. If once we were arrived at heaven, it will be a ſong of pure mercy; of mercy preſent, and judgment paſt. Chriſt is longing for our deliverance as well as we are ourſelves; he doth not delay, a ſingle moment, when the deſign of the affliction, rod, or trial is attained unto: he only waiteth, that our ſouls may be duly humbled, that the mighty hand of God may exalt them in due time.

O what think ye of Chriſt and his croſs, as well as his crown? Do ye not love him? I know that ye love him; and he is worthy of our love. *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedar: his mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem.*—What think ye of ſeventy or eighty years pilgrimage? It is juſt a ripening us for eternity. We muſt be *ſojourners here, as all our fathers were*; then we ſhall ſleep in Chriſt: they who *ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.* They ſhall then have a joyful day: *They ſhall drink, and forget their poverty; and remember their miſery no more*, Prov. xxxi. 7.—O bleſſed be his name, he keepeth the beſt wine till the latter end of the feaſt.

Laſt ſummer I had a very ſore time of trouble, and deſerted of the Lord. I often cryed to him, *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me. Let me hear the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it.* I either could not hear the voice of the rod, or I would not hear it. I longed to know the worſt about myſelf, that I might come to the blood of Jeſus with all my guilt. This was alſo a part of my conflict in the fourth year of my trouble. He took it out of my hand, and put another thing into it: yet, notwithſtanding, he ſupported me by thoſe very ſcriptures that I was ſupported with before. I ſhall only mention two or three of them to you: *That the trial of your faith being much more precious than that of gold that periſheth: though it be tried, it is found to the praiſe, and glory, and honour of God, at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. i. 7. *And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, Neither this man, nor his parents hath ſinned; but that the works of God may be made manifeſt*, John ix. 3. O bleſſed be his name that he ſends none awarefare on their own charges. I found ſuch a heart-opening in theſe promiſes, as made my ſoul to love him, as the wheels of the chariots of Aminadab. "Let us be glad and give honour to him who hath "drunk ſuch a cup of wrath at the Father's hand, as "one ſaith; who hath drunk a cup of red ſcalding "vengeance, that we might drink a cup of conſolation, "or a cup of fatherly chaſtiſement."

Dear Siſter, both pray and praiſe for me.—That the grace of our Lord Jeſus may be with you, is the deſire of your Siſter, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, Feb. 2d, 1768. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I am very much troubled with fainting; and have need of your ſympathy at the throne of grace.

LETTER XXXIX.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

MY frailty hath hindered me from writing to you before now. O that I could cauſe his name to be remembered to all generations! *Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, and hath redeemed us, and waſhed us in his own blood, and made us kings and prieſts unto God even his Father.* O! his loving-kindneſs overcomes me: his love breaks the enmity of my heart.—O what a beaſt am I that cannot praiſe him more than what I do! Attacks from the powers of darkneſs were not awanting. One morning I was looking upon my hands; they were ſo ſwelled I thought it a forerunner of death. Then the Lord brought to my mind an old promiſe, about this time eleven years: I ſpent that night in the fear of death; I had the experience of many trials, but none of death: it was the way I never went before. Then he brought to my mind, Pſal. xviii. 28. *The Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs;* with Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye ſeek, will ſuddenly come to his temple; even the meſſenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Thoſe and many other ſcriptures, were ſweet matter of meditation. Song iii. 5. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleaſe.* Gen. xxxii. 26. *And he ſaid, Let me go, for the day breaketh. I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me.* Thoſe two ſcriptures were a caution unto watchfulneſs, after ſuch a ſweet time. Jer. xiii. 16. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs.* I was very terrified at what followed in that verſe, *And before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it unto the ſhadow*

death, and make it groſs darkneſs. God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. Kiſs the ſon leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way. I thought it implyed a kiſs of ſubjection and godly fear. O but the nearer heaven the new wine is the ſweeter. I have had a good ſummer of it, though very frail. I think he ſays unto me, *Drink, yea drink abundantly, O my Beloved.* And what improvement do I make of it! O to get him glorified. I would deſire your prayers and praiſes to God for me, with other friends.—That the grace of our Lord Jeſus may be with you, is the deſire of your affectionate Siſter, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, June 24. 1768. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Send me word how your daughter does ſince ſhe came home. I deſire the favour of you to let Mrs. Glen ſee this line, as I am under great obligations to her for her kindneſs unto me.

M. L.

LETTER XL.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glaſgow*.

Dear and loving Siſter, in our Lord Jeſus,

UNDER all our diſtreſſing circumſtances, we have the greateſt reaſon of thankfulneſs for the gift of Chriſt: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him. Lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh.* I had no thought of writing to you, I am ſo indiſpoſed with trouble on my body: but hearing of your being very ill made me to lay your caſe before the Lord; and John xvi. 22. occurred to my mind: *Ye now have ſorrow; but I will ſee you a-*

gain, and your heart ſhall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. O love him who firſt loved you, and gave himſelf for you. *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.* O ſay of him, he is my huſband, my all; and let that ſuffice you. He hath loved you with an everlaſting love; and therefore with loving-kindneſs will he draw you. His love is wonderful love; it is diſtinguiſhing love; it lighted upon you, when it paſſed by men and angels. "Endure chaſtiſement, for God dealeth with you as with "ſons; and if the Father chaſten you not; or if ye be "without chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then "are ye baſtards and not ſons, Heb. xii. 7, 8." There all believers are excluded, who want chaſtiſement. Do not pore over-much upon your affliction: by your ſo doing, you will bring the affliction heavier upon yourſelf. O let your thoughts run out upon Chriſt: *In all your afflictions he was afflicted. Caſt your burden upon the Lord, and he will ſuſtain you.* I do remember, within this half year, that I muſt either have had my eyes toward the Lord for ſupport, or elſe I would have ſunk beneath the ſtream. All praiſe and honour be unto God; for I never looked unto him ſooner than I was lightened: *They looked to him and were lightened, and their faces were not aſhamed,* Pſalm xxxiv. 5. I have ſpent much of my time in ſeeking an intereſt in glorious Chriſt; and when that is done, I want conformity unto God: and conformity unto God diſcovers many wants: I want *love* to him. I want *holineſs* unto him; holineſs unto God: *Be ye holy, for I am holy, ſaith the Lord.* I want *knowlege* of him: I know nothing as I ought to know; I am a beaſt before him. I want *zeal* for his glory and honour. I want *fear* unto the Lord; *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.*—O what am I, or what is my Father's houſe, that hitherto the Lord hath helped me?—O that you would praiſe and adore him,

O turn your mourning into praiſes; it will then fare better with you.——May the God of peace be with you, to uphold and ſupport you unto the end,

GREENOCK, Oct. 26. 1768. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Give my kind ſympathy to Mr. Gray: I have been very much obliged to you and him, both for your former and late kindneſs.

LETTER XLI.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I RECEIVED your line, dated the 6th of December. I am much obliged to you for your kindneſs to me, who am truly leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies: but, *Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, honour, glory, and dominion.* I deſire to believe that infinite wiſdom and infinite love are at the mixing of my cup; and that God's tender heart will carve out no more than what he makes me able to bear: this is a great help to patience under the rod. My trouble puts me in mind of the building of the ark; it was long in building, and every ſtroak that it got was a warning to the old world of their diſſolution: ſo is my trouble unto me; it is a warning of the putting off the earthly houſe of this tabernacle: then *we have a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whoſe builder and maker is God. It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is, and behold his glory.* He hath commended his love unto my ſoul: O that I could commend his love unto others; that thoſe who ſee no beauty in him, may fall

in love with him. O! did ye ever feel the ſmell of his garments? *His garments ſmelleth of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia. His name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.* O! it is little I can ſay of him; and it is little I can think of him; it is little I can love of him, who is *altogether lovely; white and ruddy, the chief among ten thouſand.*

The beginning of February I was very bad; for two days, I was under deſertion. O I thought long for the Lord's returning again; and he returned again with that ſweet promiſe, Song ii. 10. *My Beloved ſaid unto me, Riſe up, my love, my fair one, and come away.* Tho' I be black as hell in myſelf, his beauty makes me fair: Palm xlv. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath bleſſed thee for ever.* I was pleading with the Lord that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon my ſoul, in paſſing through the vail of the ſhadow of death; and that he would enable me to declare to others what he hath done for my ſoul, that men to the Lord would give praiſe for his loving-kindneſs; but this with ſubmiſſion to his will. While I was pleading, that promiſe was darted into my mind, Mal. iii. 10. *Prove me herewith, ſaith the Lord of hoſts: if I open not the windows of heaven, and pour you out a bleſſing till there be not room enough to receive it.* He brings things new and old out of his treaſures. He brought to my remembrance an old promiſe, that was long out of mind, which ſupported me when I was hearing the goſpel. I could have wiſhed then for two Sabbaths in one week; for then they were to me exceeding ſweet. He brought to my remembrance, Iſa. lviii. 13, 14. *To call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable;* and made thee *to ride upon the high places of the earth,* and *fed thee with the heritage of Jacob.* I was minding your daughter; and that promiſe was borne in on my mind, Jer. xxxi. 18. *I have ſurely heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf thus, Turn thou me*

and I ſhall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God.— Often when I think on her, the woman of Samaria comes into my mind; and it affords matter of prayer unto me. She uſed to ſay, at the beginning of her trouble, "The ſorrows of the world wrought death unto her "ſoul; and now hell-fire was kindled in her breaſt." She took up her Bible, and read Heb. xiv. 14. *Now, through the eternal Spirit, Chriſt offered up himſelf without ſpot unto God, to purge your conſcience from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* She ſaid unto me, "Go and plead that promiſe for me, or elſe I am e-"ternally undone: go home to your knees, and lay a "lump of hell at Chriſt's feet." I went alone for her; and got that promiſe, Iſa. liv. 8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.* I thought to have ſeen that promiſe have ſome farther out-making before her death; but the Lord is ſovereign, juſt, and holy; and doth all things well.—Pray and praiſe for me: pray that the Lord may be with me in paſſing through the valley and ſhadow of death. Reſts your friend, in Chriſt,

GREENOCK, Feb. 27. 1769. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I will be much obliged to you, if you would read this to Mrs. Glen, and ſend me word how ſhe is.

LETTER XLII.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paiſley*.

Dear and loving Couſin,

I DESIRE to communicate unto you ſome ſweet experiences, which I have from my lovely Lord

Jeſus Chriſt, who ſaith, *I will make the feeble as David, and David as the angel of the Lord.*

The laſt week I had two days that were very refreſhing for ſweet communion and fellowſhip with our Lord Jeſus. I miſſed nothing ſo much as love, to lovely Jeſus. My heart was pained, becauſe I could love him ſo little. O Couſin, ſet your love upon him; ye will never rue it through eternity. I ſaw nothing in this earth, but a few imperfect ſaints: they will ſhortly come to heaven, as ſoon as they are ready. O to behold the viſion of Jehovah and the Lamb, where every new look will excite matter of praiſe and wonder to the ages of eternity: *But I ſhall ſee his face in righteouſneſs, and be ſatisfied with his likeneſs.* O to have my will ſunk in the divine will of God, where I would find it no more again. O to win to praiſe and adore him who is the perfection of beauty. O that I could adore him, who is ſo kind unto me as to allow me the ſweet blinks of his preſence and countenance, twice or thrice a-day; and, for ordinary, not above three days abſence: but when he goes away, he creates a want in the ſoul, that nothing but himſelf can make up. He fills the ſoul with ſelf-abhorrence and lothing of itſelf, becauſe of its own abominations. In agreeableneſs to that word, *I will go into my place until they acknowledge their iniquity, and ſeek me early:* then the Lord comes and manifeſts himſelf to the ſoul that cannot want him. O to be perfect in love! O what flames of love will be in heaven, where every ſaint will be made a flame. John Tinnie, whom you wrote of, as he uſed to expreſs himſelf, was like one lying at the water-ſide, waiting for his Lord's coming. He ſaid to the Rev. Mr. Turner, that day he died, "Sir, I do "not rue my choice of the Lord for my portion;" and he died that very night, being on Sabbath, about ſeven o'clock: he died very comfortably.

Dear Couſin, pray that the Lord may perfect that which concerneth me. Pray that he may lift up the

light of his countenance upon me. Pray that he may be with me through the valley of the ſhadow of death: that thoſe that are left behind may have reaſon to praiſe and adore him, for his loving-kindneſs unto me. This with ſubmiſſion to his holy will.——The grace of our Lord Jeſus be with you,

GREENOCK, June. 8. 1769. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XLIII.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paiſley*.

Dear and loving Couſin,

I HAD no thought of writing to you ſo ſoon. *Extol the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together*, Pſal. xxxiv. 3. *For he is thy Lord, and worſhip thou him*, Pſal. xlv. 11. *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him*, Pſalm lxxxix. 7. My heart has been much enlarged with views of the love of God, the ſpring of our redemption; the righteouſneſs of Chriſt through which it is conveyed to us; his offices, and his endearing relations. O what a beaſt am I, that can love him ſo little, when he is worthy of ſo much love. I think he makes me a demonſtration of the power and reality of religion. Glory, glory to God, I never found a ſweeter compoſure of ſpirit; yea, I found juſt cauſe to bleſs him for the rod, and to bleſs him becauſe it was his good pleaſure to afflict me; *This is the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in my eyes.*—If the Lord withdraw divine ſupport, but one quarter of an hour, I would ſoon diſhonour him; I could not bear the rod with patience.

On the laſt Sabbath-day, I got a view of my lot being well ordered of God: *He doth all things well.* He

is a God of infinite wiſdom. He hath power and ſkill to order a temptation for his own glory and my good. I ſaw that temptation of ſelf-murder to be wiſely ordered: it came to me before I was twenty years, and laſted till that ſummer before I took my trouble; and by means of that temptation the Lord brought down my corruptions, that were ſtrong like giants: the ſin of unbelief, pride, and ſelf, and many other abominations. By means of this temptation, the Lord kept me near to himſelf; yet I would have been glad to have been quit of it: it was an uneaſy thorne in my ſide. I was made to *bear the yoke in my youth.* I never thought, in theſe days, when it was ſo bitter to me, that I would have had cauſe to bleſs God for it: and, O my dear Couſin, do ye bleſs him for it; and all them who hear of it, bleſs him for it, in behalf of the vileſt of ſinners. That ſcripture occurred to me, and I thought it was exceeding ſweet, Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12. *He found him in the waſte howling wilderneſs; he led him about, he inſtructed, he keeped him as the apple of his eye. As the eagle ſtirreth up her neſt, fluttereth over her young, ſpreadeth abroad her wings; ſo the Lord did lead him, when there was no ſtrange God with him.* O Sirs, Jehovah, the God of truth, did for me what no ſtrange God could do: When my lovely Lord goes away what deadneſs he leaves behind him? O what deadneſs and lifeleſſneſs taketh place! Iniquity prevaileth much, which made me to cry out, O what a beaſt am I! not worthy that thou ſhouldſt come under my roof: *Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple.* Yet I got leave to plead with him that he would lift up the light of his countenance, for his great name's ſake.—*Be it known unto you, O houſe of Iſrael, that I do not this for your ſakes, but for my great name's ſake.* While I was pleading my lovely Lord returned again with a ſweet word, Song vi. 3. *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lillies.* O to be above, where I will get an open viſion of Jehovah and

the Lamb: *Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy houſe; they will be ſtill praiſing thee.* O pray and praiſe for me.—May the God of peace be with you. Ye ſpeak of a little reviving among you; and I deſire it may grow as the corn, and caſt forth roots as Lebanon,

GREENOCK, July 19. 1769. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XLIV.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I HAVE wearied very much for your writing to me. My lovely Lord hath commended himſelf unto me; and, O that I could commend him to others, that they might fall in love with lovely Jeſus. Woes me that I can love him ſo little, who is worthy of ſo much love, and altogether lovely. There is a ſcripture that was much in my mind, Pſalm cvii. 8. *For he ſatisfieth the longing ſoul, and filleth the hungry ſoul with goodneſs.* I think that ſcripture will have its full accompliſhment in heaven, in the full viſion of God. There were ſome who deſired me to remember them in prayer to God: I got a very large view of the ever-bleſſed, of the adorable and glorious Trinity of Perſons for them; *The Father himſelf loveth you.* I remember a ſaying of Dr. Owen's. 'When our Lord was about 'to leave this world, the diſciples deſired their Lord 'to intreat the Father's love for them: but our Lord 'told them, the Father himſelf loveth you; the Son 'purchaſed his redemption; the Holy Ghoſt applyed 'it to his ſoul:' and I was made to ſay, O happy man. Satan ſoon attacked me, and ſuddenly ſuggeſted, that the Son did not purchaſe our redemption, but that the Father had purchaſed it; whereas the Father loved us,

becauſe Chriſt loved us. Satan threw ſuch a miſt and fog upon the word, that I could not ſee, till the Lord returned himſelf, and caſt light upon the word: then he rebuked Satan, and ſhined upon his own bleſſed word.—Bleſſed be his glorious name.

I had a ſweet manifeſtation ſome days bygone: the Lord ſhined upon that word, Pſalm xcvi. 8. *Bring an offering and come into his courts.* O but our Lord Jeſus is a ſweet-ſmelling ſacrifice unto God: he is a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour unto God; and by the ſavoury ſmell of his ointment he puts away the ſtinking ſmell of ſin: *He hath magnified the law and made it honourable. He hath brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs*, whereby a guilty rebel, ſuch as I am, hath favour with God and acceptance. My Lord is my life and my ſtrength, my righteouſneſs, my Surety, my all, for time and for eternity: and though I had ten thouſand ſouls I would truſt them all with him. O for a full gale of the Spirit of God to blow me into the harbour of glory, even into Emmanuel's land, where *the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and the weary be at reſt.*

I was pleading with the Lord for his bleſſing on the little that I can read: when thus employed, Iſa. lx. 19. came into my mind with power and life, and brought my will to a kindly ſubmiſſion to the will of God. The words themſelves were moſt ſweet: *The ſun ſhall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightneſs ſhall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light, and thy God thy glory.* O what a want is it that he cannot fill up! *My God ſhall ſupply all your wants, according to his riches in glory, by Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. iv. 19.—By this time the manifeſtation ſeemed to wear off: and that word came to my mind, *Nevertheleſs I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.* I could not win to a ſubmiſſion to his holy will. I was loth to want his ſweet preſence; but Satan was not awanting with his ſtratagems. I ſaid, *My ſoul ſhall follow hard after him.* O

that I had a wreſtling ſpirit like Jacob; he wreſtled with him for the bleſſing till the breaking of the day; and, as a Prince, *He had power with God, and prevailed.*—But while I was thinking on this ſcripture, poor backſliding Scotland came to my mind; poor covenant-breaking and covenant-burning Scotland! O that the Lord would be as a purifier of ſilver unto her, that ſhe may offer unto the Lord a ſacrifice that is more acceptable for all the ills that ſhe hath done. The Lord has thoughts of love concerning her: he ſays of her, *This is my reſt for ever: here will I dwell, for I have deſired it*, Pſalm cxxxii. 14. Though we are a covenant-breaking people; he is a covenant-keeping God. He ſays of Zion, *My mercy will I keep for her for evermore; and my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with her*, Pſalm lxxxix. 28. I deſire the help of your prayers and praiſes, with other acquaintances, unto lovely Jeſus, for what he hath done for me.—The grace of our Lord be with you,

GREENOCK, Oct. 2d, 1769. } MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I long much to know how my dear friend Mrs. Glen is: I would be glad to know how it fares with her ſoul.—I think the Lord ſays concerning her, *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

LETTER XLV.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paiſley*.

Dear and loving Couſin,

IF the Lord will aſſiſt me in it, I will communicate a few experiences to you, which took place with me about the time that the ſacrament was diſpenſed at

Glaſgow, and the week thereafter; particularly on the Sabbath, and the days before. It hath eſcaped my memory what was matter of exerciſe to me at that time; but on the Monday I was pleading that the Lord would not ſend the multitude away empty, leſt they faint by the way. When thus employed, that word came into my mind with life and power, John vii. 37. *In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water.* And Pſalm lxxxiv. 7. *They go from ſtrength to ſtrength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* O but the Lord takes a care of his people; he will not leave them in the wilderneſs till he bring them home to Zion.

I was endeavouring to bleſs the Lord for an enlargement that a young man got on the Sabbath-day, and that word came into my mind, John i. 50. *Thou ſhalt ſee greater things than theſe.* 1 John iii. 3. *It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, and ſee him as he is, and behold his glory.* There is a full view of our Lord Jeſus gotten in heaven: wait a little, and then the glaſs of ordinances will be drawn, and the glaſs of promiſes will be withdrawn; then we ſhall have the open viſion of Jehovah and the Lamb. Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain from eternity, decretively; ſlain typically, under the old-teſtament diſpenſation; and ſlain actually, in the fulneſs of time. It pleaſed God to give me a more full view of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the wiſdom of God in a myſtery; then I abhorred myſelf in duſt and aſhes, and ſaid to the Lord, I am a beaſt, and know nothing as I ought to know: *That which I know not, O Lord, teach thou me.* The Lord give me wiſdom and knowledge; for I know nothing of divine things as I ought to know: I am unclean, unclean; utterly unworthy to take thy holy and reverent name in my ſinful and polluted lips.

I had of late ſome pretty ſore turns of my trouble; but they did not laſt very long. The Lord enabled me to ſay, *Here am I, let him do unto me what ſeemeth him good.* I found my will ſunk in the divine will of God: I found a ſweet refreſhment come from the preſence of the Lord, which made me to ſay, "Lord, "never let me find my will again." I was ſore beſet by the devil, and his firey darts: I thought I had my heart much to blame in it; for it firſt departed from the Lord, and wandered upon the mountains of vanity; and there I met with theſe vile abominable thoughts. —I pleaded earneſtly with the Lord that he would not let them come through my mind again.

Upon Friday night laſt, one came to viſit me, and complained much of Satan's temptations, and of the Lord's hidding himſelf: He ſaid unto me, "Ye may "get a viſit of the Lord this night, or in the morn-"ing." Glory to him, he came in the morning; and his viſit was ſo ſeaſonable and ſweet, that I invited all things on earth to praiſe him. Praiſe is too heavy a work for us. I joined iſſue with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. cxlviii. 2. *Praiſe him, ye angels; praiſe him, O ye ſun, moon, and ſtars: praiſe him dragons, and every depth.* —But my ſoul is more obliged to praiſe him than all theſe.

I was after this led to mount Calvery, to ſee our Lord and his bloody ſufferings. I ſaw the guilt of an elect world meeting upon him. O what a load of guilt had he on his back! The ſins of an elect world, the Father's wrath, and the curſe of a broken law! The Father gave the ſword of juſtice a command to awake againſt the Man that was his Fellow, Zech. xiii. 7. Had he not been God as well as man, he could not have borne it one moment. Oh! what a burden had mount Calvery upon it! It never had ſuch a weight upon it before, nor ever will again. It made a heathen Philoſopher cry out, "That the God of nature "ſuffered, or the world was diſſolving." I was com-

plaining before, that I could not get a ſuitable meditation on our Lord's ſufferings: but this day I may behold, with wonder and admiration, Jeſus cried out, *My God, my God! why haſt thou forſaken me?* He was deſerted of the Father, as he was Mediator; I think ſo: but his union with the God-head ſtandeth firm.

I had afterwards ſome confuſed thoughts concerning Chriſt's aſſuming of the human nature. Satan endeavoured to perſuade me, that he had aſſumed a human perſon, which would have made four perſons in the adorable Trinity: but I could not believe that.—Then I cryed to the Lord, by prayer and ſupplication, that he would ſend forth his light and his truth, and let them be guides unto me. A little after this, that word came into my mind, *The power of the Holy Ghoſt overſhadowed the virgin*, and that very moment the human nature was joined to the divine Perſon of the Son of God.—There is a myſtery indeed!

I would have ſent word to the young man that has ſtaid long in the place of the breaking forth of children; but I am not able, at preſent; tell him, that he muſt do as the lepers did at the gates of Samaria: if they ſtaid in the city they muſt die; if they went out of the city, they would die. Caſt yourſelf upon glorious Chriſt, you will but die: come without any legal qualification; if you ſtand waiting upon them, they will be a wall between you and heaven; there will be no winning over it. Come pollutted and vile as you are to Chriſt. He ſtandeth with out-ſtretched arms to embrace you; and if ye come to Chriſt, and find not welcome, ye will be the firſt that ever he refuſed.—That the God of peace may be with you, is the deſire of your Couſin,

GREENOCK, Nov. 27. 1769. MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XLVI.

To Mr. THOMAS GRAHAM, in *Paiſley*.

I WOULD very gladly ſpeak a word to you, Sir, were the Lord pleaſed to back it with power, life, and liberty.

I would mention ſome ſcriptures that occurred to me on your behalf: Iſa. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye ſaved.* This is a very extenſive call, from the ends of the earth. Look unto me, glorious Me! *That ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave.*

The next ſcripture that occurred, was Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *I will ſprinkle you with clean water, and ye ſhall be clean: from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols, will I cleanſe you.* O Sirs, here God pronounces the blood of Chriſt to be *clean: The heavens are not clean in his ſight; and he chargeth his angels with folly.* Here *Chriſt's blood cleanſeth from all ſin.* Are your ſins and guilt ſo heavy that they are like to preſs you down to hell? and you are made to wonder at the divine patience of God, that keeps you ſo long out of hell, notwithſtanding of all your provocations? Do you ſee the law purſuing you for the debt of perfect obedience? ſend the law to Chriſt: *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth.* Chriſt hath a righteouſneſs to fulfil the law; and he hath paid the utmoſt farthing of the debt to the law and juſtice of God: upon the croſs he ſaid, *It is finiſhed;* and *gave up the ghoſt.* He hath ſtrength to give you to perform duties, for work and warefare. O love him who loved you from eternity, who is altogether lovely. He is the beauty of the Godhead. Had you the eye of faith but opened to ſee Chriſt's raviſhing beauty, his excellency and glory, you would be ready to wonder why the world were not all running after him.

The third ſcripture was, John xi. 44. *Jeſus ſaid,*

Looſe him, and let him go. What need hath a ſinner to put the work into glorious Chriſt's hand? *He was bound about with grave cloaths.* Ye cannot walk one foot in the way of the Lord, until ye be looſed, and let go. He is bound about with the chain of unbelief: he is bound about with the chain of ſelf: he is bound about with the chain of pride; with the chain of atheiſm; with the chain of formality; with the chain of carnality; with the chain of enmity againſt God. The heart is *not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, while in a natural ſtate. He thinks he has ſome duty or other to preſent to the Lord: prayers, tears, or the like. It is ſupernatural power that will bring a ſinner out of himſelf, to rely upon Chriſt Jeſus, for righteouſneſs and ſtrength.

Be not overmuch troubled with thoſe helliſh blaſphemous thoughts of the devil: they are like lightening thrown into a room; they are not of the room, yet they are thrown into the room: ſo are theſe blaſphemous thoughts thrown into your heart. Let Satan anſwer for them unto God, they are his, and not yours. A carnal wandering thought, in time of prayer, is more ſinful than they are. When you go to the miniſter, or to a Chriſtian acquaintance to complain, neither think theſe thoughts over again, nor yet name them over to them; but tell them that you are troubled with blaſpemous thoughts of the devil: they will underſtand you very well. Satan would have all convictions to come to nothing; thereby he gains his point, to keep poor ſinners away from Chriſt. Believe not Satan, though he tell you that ye have the external call of the goſpel, ye will never get the internal call of the Spirit of God; *He is a liar from the beginning, and the truth is not in him.*

Another ſcripture that occurred was, Iſa. xliv. 3. *I will pour waters upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground.* If you are not thirſty, you are exceeding dry. Are you a-thirſt for this or the other va-

nity, or luſt, or idol? But I expect better things of you; even that you are thirſting for a drink of Chriſt's water which he has to give, which is to them that receive it, a *well of water, ſpringing up unto everlaſting life.* If this be the thirſt that you are longing for, *He will ſatisfy your deſires,* and *fill the hungry with good things.* He will anſwer your prayers in his own time. He is the merciful Samaritan that comes over the ſinner's weakneſs: he pours wine and oil into his wounds. *Thoſe that are broken in their hearts, and grieved in their minds, he healeth; he tenderly binds up their painful wounds.* When the ſinner is come this length, that he cannot believe more than he can remove mountains, it is the breaking of the day with him; there is room in his heart to work faith in it: and, O that Chriſt may work faith, and bear all the glory. To whom be praiſe, glory, and honour, for ever and ever.—— The grace of our Lord Jeſus be with you,

GREENOCK, Jan. 18. 1770. } MARION LAIRD.

LETTER XLVII.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glaſgow.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jeſus,

I COULD not write with my Brother-in-law to Mr. Smith, to thank him for his kind letter. I believe that Mrs. Glen left me her legacy for the Lord's ſake, though I am unworthy of any of his mercies. O that the Lord may enable me to glorify and to honour him with it. There aroſe a queſtion in my mind whether *love* or *praiſe* was the greateſt duty; immediately it occurred, that *love* was the greateſt. Love makes way for the praiſing of God. I wot not how it comes to paſs, but I think I want love more than any other grace.—Sometimes I am afraid of repining againſt the Lord, why he keeps me ſo long here: *He doth all things*

well. It ill becomes me to think ſo of him, who is ſo kind and ſo lovely a Lord unto me: O for a will ſunk in the divine will of God. O but that is a ſweet word, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *And he ſaid unto me, My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee; and my ſtrength made perfect in thy weakneſs.* I am waiting for the Lord's accompliſhment of his word; and ſuch a word as that, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye ſeek, will ſuddenly come to his temple; even the meſſenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in,* Rev. xxii. 12. *Behold I come quickly!* and my ſoul ſaith, *Even ſo; come, Lord Jeſus.*

Sometimes I am dead and lifeleſs, and am active for no ſpiritual duty, until the Lord come back again. He ſometimes lays a burden of concern for others upon my ſpirit, and brings me near to himſelf, and makes me to ſay, *Behold I vile, I am unclean, unclean:* but *thou art holy, thou that doſt inhabit Iſrael's praiſe.*

This way I got acceſs for your old daughter: when I was pleading for her, the Lord bore in upon my ſpirit, Hab. ii. 3. *The viſion is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will ſpeak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* In thoſe words I got a view of the Father and the Son agreeing, from eternity, upon her converſion; and ordaining that preciſe moment for her converſion: and it is your duty to pray and to wait for it, till the Lord perform his word.

This may ſuffice Mr. Smith's enquiry at me. I am unabled, by reaſon of my trouble being heavy upon me, either to ſpeak to you, or to write to him: but I deſire to bleſs and to adore the Lord, that it is not worſe with me. I deſire both you and him to pray unto, and alſo to praiſe the Lord for me.——This is the deſire of a priſoner,

GREENOCK, June 22. 1770. } MARION LAIRD.

THE END.

BRITISH 14 JY 96 MUSEUM

well. It ill becomes me to think ſo of him, who is ſo kind and ſo lovely a Lord unto me: O for a will ſunk in the divine will of God. O but that is a ſweet word, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *And he ſaid unto me, My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee; and my ſtrength made perfect in thy weakneſs.* I am waiting for the Lord's accompliſhment of his word; and ſuch a word as that, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye ſeek, will ſuddenly come to his temple; even the meſſenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in,* Rev. xxii. 12. *Behold I come quickly!* and my ſoul ſaith, *Even ſo; come, Lord Jeſus.*

Sometimes I am dead and lifeleſs, and am active for no ſpiritual duty, until the Lord come back again. He ſometimes lays a burden of concern for others upon my ſpirit, and brings me near to himſelf, and makes me to ſay, *Behold I vile, I am unclean, unclean:* but *thou art holy, thou that doſt inhabit Iſrael's praiſe.*

This way I got acceſs for your old daughter: when I was pleading for her, the Lord bore in upon my ſpirit, Hab. ii. 3. *The viſion is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will ſpeak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* In thoſe words I got a view of the Father and the Son agreeing, from eternity, upon her converſion; and ordaining that preciſe moment for her converſion: and it is your duty to pray and to wait for it, till the Lord perform his word.

This may ſuffice Mr. Smith's enquiry at me. I am unabled, by reaſon of my trouble being heavy upon me, either to ſpeak to you, or to write to him: but I deſire to bleſs and to adore the Lord, that it is not worſe with me. I deſire both you and him to pray unto, and alſo to praiſe the Lord for me.——This is the deſire of a priſoner,

GREENOCK, June 22. 1770. MARION LAIRD.

THE END.

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